

# THE SOUTHERN LITERARY GAZETTE.

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DECEMBER AND JANUARY

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AFRICAN REPOSITORY.—PHILADELPHIA.

The Negro's Friend, or Sheffield Anti-Slavery Album.

It has often been remarked, that the abuse and misapplication of terms, forms quite as frequent and teeming a source of controversy, as real differences of opinion; and that such disputes, as might naturally be expected, are always more protracted, and more acrimonious and more violent, than any others. The subjects of slavery and emancipation, which have been so much stirred of late, both in England and this country, and which are daily becoming sources of increasing irritation between the Northern and Southern sections of our Union, as well as between Great Britain and her Colonies in the West Indies may be instanced as affording apposite illustrations of the truth of the above remark, and of the peculiar and anomalous nature of mere verbal disputes. (for such, we think, the discussions alluded to, may be proved to be,) which arguments serve but more fiercely to embroil, and proofs to render more intricate and perplexed—it being necessarily impossible for the parties to come to a satisfactory conclusion, where they neglect to define with accuracy the meaning of the terms they employ; and mutually misunderstand and habitually misapply them. The heat and irritation of the disputants, on these occasions, may be observed regularly to increase in proportion as they deviate from, and lose sight of the true point

in debate; and is generally in the ratio of the indefiniteness of their ideas and language: so that instead of gaining ground, they only continue, like the waves of the ocean, contending among shallows and quicksands, to recoil more violently and distantly from each other after every encounter—"and of the vain contest, appears no end." The abuse of the term *free*, as applied to persons of colour, disfranchised as they virtually are, and permanently degraded below every other class in society, through the force of the prejudices which the servile condition of so many of their race, their complexion, and, we must add, their coarser physical organization, so naturally tend to create and keep up against them, has undoubtedly been the source of much of the misunderstanding and unfortunate irritation which the above questions have given rise to between Great Britain and her subjects in the West Indies—who have no less cause than ourselves, to deplore the consequences that have flowed from the agitation of this perilous subject, and to deprecate the further evils which seem likely to result from the errors and misconceptions that continue to prevail respecting it. This term, originally employed to distinguish the emancipated man of colour, from the slave in a state of personal servitude, and at first implying nothing more, in its application to the former, than that he was no longer subject to the controul of an individual master—it being well understood that his condition continued in all other respects unchanged—that he still remained the unfortunate and despised negro, cut off from nearly every civil and social privilege, and treated by his white brethren as a being of an inferior species—this term, we repeat, which was scarcely applicable, even in this restricted sense, to a set of persons whose situation was thus as remote from any thing like freedom, as almost any form of bondage could well be, was above all others peculiarly liable to abuse and misapprehension, from the very comprehensive and clearly defined meaning so generally attached to it. Hence, it has happened, that it has gradually come to be used,

apparently even by both parties, in the mischievous controversy to which it has given rise, in its usual and more common acceptation—so that we would be led to suppose, from the manner in which it is now habitually employed, and the sense in which it seems to be generally received by the public, that it described a set of beings raised to a participation in all the advantages of civil freedom and social equality ; and that the only question was, whether it would not be just and proper, that the rest of the race who are in a state of personal bondage, should also be made free, and placed in the same enviable and happy situation.

The “universal emancipation of the African race,”\* which certain Associations both in England and this country, have so benevolently, but we fear quixotically, undertaken to promote, is undoubtedly an object to which the friends of humanity in every part of the world, would naturally wish success, and would willingly co-operate to bring about, could this be done without danger or detriment to the interests of other portions of the human family, whose safety and happiness are certainly not less entitled to the attention and consideration of the philanthropist, than the case of the unfortunate and oppressed natives of Africa. The rash and mistaken zealots, who have been most forward in advocating and promoting this grand philanthropic scheme, have manifested such indifference as to the means by which they effect their objects, and so inconsistent a disregard of the dire consequences which their unweighed and precipitate proceedings are but too well calculated to produce, and evince at the same time, such an entire ignorance of the true nature and structure of the terrible and explosive Torpedo, which they so venturously handle and unhesitatingly meddle with, that if the subject were not one too serious to admit of even a moment’s indulgence of ridicule, “Humanity in the heroes, or Philanthropy run mad,” would be the only epithets we should apply to their insane conduct, and the wild and senseless declamations which

\* See Twenty-eight Report of the African Institution.

they continue to pour forth upon this popular and inexhaustible topic. He must be dull indeed, and more than usually ignorant of the common places of rhetoric and declamation, who cannot rise to something like eloquence upon so fine a subject, and who cannot appeal with moving effect to "gods and columns," and to every sympathy and sentiment of the human breast, in favour of oppressed Africa, and her unhappy sons. Those, however, who are acquainted with the real merits of the question, or who will take the trouble to inform themselves correctly respecting the actual condition of the free and enslaved portions of the race, will, we are satisfied, become thoroughly convinced of the extravagance and futility of most of these high wrought declamations, and, we venture to assert, will find no difficulty in deciding which of the two classes of unfortunate beings above referred to, are most entitled to the sympathy and attention of the philanthropist—those who are slaves under the care of owners, whose interest it is to promote their comfort and welfare, and who therefore generally experience all the ameliorations that the state of servitude admits of, or that can render it tolerable; or those who, deprived of every privilege valued by freemen, are in the condition of slaves without protectors, and are left to maintain themselves by their own exertions, under discouragements and disadvantages, that operate both to paralyse their industry and deteriorate their moral character; and, finally, who are exposed to nearly all the evils and made to feel all the bitterness of bondage, but its name.

The political rights of the negroes at the North, are, as is well known, wholly nominal; and certainly were we told that there existed in any country, a class of people who were excluded from all offices, civil, military and ecclesiastical; who were excluded from all decent society—or equal association with their fellow men; and with whom it was considered as a species of contamination to come in contact, or form any connexion by intermarriage—we should not hesitate a moment in saying, that the unfortunate set of persons thus



situated, could be regarded in no other light than as the most degraded of slaves, and the most unhappy and oppressed of mankind; and should be very apt to continue in this opinion, even after discovering that this proscribed race, were of a black complexion and had woolly hair; though we might readily admit that this circumstance sufficiently accounted for, though it by no means justified their being kept in the wretched and depressed condition above described. But were we further told, that these miserable wretches were emphatically, and, as it *par excellence*, termed *free*; and that those by whom they had been thus disfranchised and depressed, plumed themselves upon having given them their liberty, and upon their superior liberality in ridding themselves of them as far as possible, by graciously manumitting them, when they could no longer derive any advantage from their services; and “letting them down the wind to prey at fortune”—we should be not a little at a loss how to understand so strange an instance of mockery and inconsistency—so flagrant an abuse of terms, and so palpable a perversion of language. The above, however, is without a tittle of exaggeration, the history of the free people of color in the Northern States; and is no more than a faithful picture of the absurdity and inconsistency of our brethren in that quarter—who, overlooking the situation of this class of wretched outcasts, that have so long been the burthen and the opprobrium of their communities; and form “the dark tartarean dregs,” of the worst part of their population\*—have busied themselves with, and

\* We copy the following remarks from the *Analectic Magazine* for 1819; they are from a review of Prince Saunders’s *Memoir to the American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery*:—“The want of personal ambition, and the influence of colour, render the situation of the negro far more hopeless than that of any other human being in similar circumstances of whom history has preserved any memorial. Under the Roman and Grecian republics, when a slave was once admitted to the privileges of citizenship, he mixed unnoticed with the rest of his fellow countrymen, because no odious distinction of features or colour kept alive the recollection of his former condition. It is not to be wondered therefore, if with all these causes operating against them, the negro population of Philadelphia, should frequently become liable to the jurisdiction of the criminal law; but we believe even those who

continue to be sadly troubled at the slavery existing in the South, for no other reason, as we might be tempted to suppose, than that it is of a far less oppressive character than that practised on their part; and presents in all respects a favourable contrast to the mixed

are inclined to judge most unfavorably of the character of this race, are not aware of the extent of the evil. We have taken some pains to ascertain the comparative number of blacks who have come under the cognizance of the civil magistrate for the commission of offences, and though we have not been altogether successful, yet enough has been obtained to give a satisfactory view of the general state of their morals. It appears from an authentic statement in our possession, that during the period of five months which elapsed between the 1st of October 1817 to the 1st of March 1818, one thousand three hundred and sixty-seven persons were committed to the prison of Philadelphia of whom 917 were whites and 450 free blacks, and that during the succeeding seven months, 1823 persons were committed 1200 of whom were whites and 623 free blacks making for one year a total of 2117 whites and 1073 free blacks. The proportion then that the number of white offenders bore to the black was not quite two to one. Whereas our readers will remember that we have estimated the proportion of white inhabitants to negroes, within the city and county of Philadelphia, as about eight to one. In other words it follows that one out of every sixteen blacks was committed to prison in the space of a single year, while of the whites, only one out of sixty became in like manner amenable to justice. This, however, it may be said, does not afford a fair criterion by which the comparative morality of the two races can be estimated. The partiality of subordinate magistrates may induce them to lend too ready an ear to complaints against the people of colour, and thus a number who are on the records of the prison, may have been committed without just cause. Many of the negroes it may be said by whom the prisons are crowded have been committed merely as vagrants, and not as the perpetrators of crime. The records, however, of the criminal courts afford a melancholy answer to this objection. We have before us a small pamphlet published about two years since by the Philadelphia Society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, which affords a statistical view of the operations of the penal code of Pennsylvania. It appears from the statements in this work, that on the 19th. July 1816 407 convicts were confined in the Penitentiary and prison for a term of one year and upwards—of these 231 were white and 176 black:—the proportion being about as one and one third to one! The convicts it should be observed, were brought from all parts of the state: but of this number 231 were committed in Philadelphia of whom the greater number were blacks. The relative proportion has not changed since that period in favor of the negroes as we find from a table published in the newspapers of the offenders tried at the last court of Oyer and Terminer. This Court in which the highest offences are examined is held twice a year in Philadelphia. At the session which ended on the 18th of January 1819 twenty-eight persons were indicted of whom sixteen were whites and twelve blacks, and sixteen offenders convicted nine of whom were blacks and eight whites. The inferior species of crimes were tried at the Quarter Sessions and the Mayors Court, in both which, we have reason to believe there appears the same proportion of negro offenders. These records, then

and anomalous system of equal laws and practical disfranchisement ; of theoretical freedom and unrelieved oppression ; of which we have thus endeavoured to give some idea, but of which it would require a much more full and minute description to convey any just conception. Mitigated as the practice of slavery now is in the United States, it constitutes a system of protection for our black population, under which it may safely be asserted, that they enjoy a far greater degree of personal comfort, and are better provided for in sickness, in childhood and old age ; and are trained up in better moral habits, and form in all respects a superior class to the depraved and abused portion of the race to whom a wretched mockery of freedom has been held out by their well meaning but mistaken friends ; which wears, indeed at first view the fair and smiling appearance of the tempting fruit of liberty ; but which, when tasted proves, like the apples of Pandemonium, only dust and bitter ashes upon the lips.

The free negro, however well he may be disposed to conduct himself, is necessarily deprived of every stimulus to honest or ambitious exertion, by his sense of the prejudices entertained against him, on the part of his white brethren, on account of his colour and the general slavery and degradation of his race. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that conscious of the impossibility of his ever rising to eminence, or attaining to a decent standing in the community in which he lives—he loses all energy and pride of character : and ultimately becomes a pauper or a criminal, and the tenant of an alms-house or a penitentiary. While the Jew, or the Greek, in Turkey or Algiers, may rise in the confidence of their barbarian masters, and even attain to situations of trust and honor in the State, the free negro of the North, is irreversibly con-

furnish convincing proof of the alarming state of the morals of the free negroes. The extraordinary proportion which the number of offenders bears to the whole amount of coloured population is we believe, unexampled in the annals of any race and argues a general and deeply seated corruption, that ought to awaken the attention of those who are to take care—*nequid detrimenti respublica capiat.*

demned to perpetual inferiority, and irremediable degradation, and finds himself shunned and despised by even the humblest and poorest of the white classes among whom he lives. In fine, he is allowed little more than the bare privilege of breathing the same air with the white man; being in all other respects, as effectually segregated and excluded from society, as he would be by the walls of a prison, or the interposition of mountains and seas. His former master withdraws from him his protection and calls this giving him his freedom,\* or in other words, leaves him at liberty to take care of himself in the best manner he can; so that he is turned loose as an animal, whose further maintainance would be a burthen to its owner; and left to shift for himself under discouragements and disadvantages that tend to paralyze his spirit, and defeat his best exertions; and which (as we have seen) ultimately force him down to the lowest grade and position in the scale of society. His emancipator, having thus as he supposes fairly got rid of him, takes no small credit to himself for so extraordinary an act of generosity and humanity, and when his neighbour refuses to follow his example, or begs leave to pause over and reflect on the probable consequences of the measure, he grows impatient at his delay, and indignant at his hesitation, and denounces him as a slave holder and oppressor, and seems perfectly satisfied, that the adoption of the measure by himself forms alone a sufficient argument in its favor, and affords an evidence of its reasonableness and propriety, that should at once remove all doubts and objections from the minds of even the most timid and cautious. His views on this subject, seem but little affected, by finding, that in no long time, his freeman whom he had flattered himself he had got clear of, is thrown back upon his hands and that he has to support him as a

\* We are aware that in most of the States the person manumitting a slave, is required to provide for his maintenance during life but as this provision does not extend to his descendants, they are necessarily left in the situation we have described.



pauper or guard him as a criminal, for the duty or expense in either case being shared with him by others, proves less onerous and irksome than would be the maintenance of a slave, who could yield him no profitable labor or services in return. We contend then that to hold out to the slave of the South, a prospect of freedom which it is apparent can never be realized by any of his race in the same country that has been the scene of their bondage, is only to trifle with his feelings, to render him discontented with his situation, and an ingrate and an enemy to his master, who is his best protector, and who has every inducement to promote his welfare and happiness, and render him satisfied with his condition. Our Northern brethren, however, not unfrequently, thus, reverse the maxim respecting charity, which they seem to consider as properly beginning *abroad*—hence, their benevolence but too often overflows into remote and extraneous channels, when it might be far better bestowed on objects nearer home. It is, however, characteristic of genuine philanthropy, to act rather from immediate impulse and enthusiasm, than in obedience to the duties of cool reflection and caution, and certainly the more distant the objects are to which we extend our charity, the more conspicuous proof do we give of enlarged views, and of the disinterestedness of our feelings. While, therefore, there remains an Indian unchristianized in the Pacific, or an African in bondage in the South, we cannot expect that the heathen on our border, or the vice and misery of our free black population, can for the present engage the attention of our crusading missionaries and zealous abolitionists; intent as they are on higher objects, and on schemes connected with the general welfare and happiness of the human race. Our friends, indeed, like the matron described in Scripture, are “troubled about many things;” and we know not whether to anticipate their success or failure under the load and pressure of the numerous plans of emancipation, colonization, conversion, &c. &c. which at present absorb their attention, and so fully occupy their hands.

The truth is, that every new scheme set afloat in the mother country, whether it be for the benefit of the Hindoos or the Greeks—for the formation of Bible Societies or Saving Banks, or for the “universal emancipation of the African race,” however wild and extravagant it may be—“be its intents wicked or charitable”—is sure to find as speedy a passage as winds and sails can give it, to the congenial soil of New-England; and there runs a career which in general most magically accords in history and duration, with that of the parent project abroad. It is to this commerce in schemes, bubbles, and projects of all sorts, that so steadily goes on between the mother country and a portion of her ancient colonies, that the stir made of late years in the Northern States upon the subject of slavery, emancipation, colonization, &c. may as usual be directly and legitimately traced. England, in the course of her long struggle with France, which she represented as being maintained for the preservation of her existence, continued to monopolize the commerce of nearly the whole civilized world; and succeeded in completely destroying the marine of Europe; and, but for the rising Navy of the United States, would have attained to that universal dominion on the ocean, which she so strenuously endeavoured to prevent her giant rival from acquiring on the land. There still, however, remained one lucrative branch of trade open to her rivals, which not only proved a source of wealth to their colonies, but also afforded them a nursery for seamen from which they could readily supply themselves with the materials for new armaments, and with the means of making continued resistance to her commercial encroachments, and her restless and all-grasping naval ambition.\* It was then, for the first time, that the grand philanthropic scheme for abolishing the slave

\* Not less than two or three thousand Spanish, French, and Portuguese seamen were thrown out of employment by the active measures pursued by the British Government against the Slave Trade; and to this circumstance we owed the aggravated piracy that at one time infested the West India Seas, and which was so successfully put down by the gallant exertions of our Navy.

trade, was listened to by her statesmen, and received their countenance and support; and the blow thus given to that odious traffic, adds another illustration to the great moral of all human history, which shows us good perpetually educed out of evil, by the beneficent decrees of an all-wise and overruling Providence. To this scheme succeeded plans for the universal emancipation of the African race, which as usual were forthwith transferred to, and at once became the order of the day in the U. States; and our Northern brethren, who had never before thought of stirring the subject of slavery, which had been settled at the Revolution by the forethoughtful Statesmen and Sages of that period, in a manner as they supposed calculated to prevent its ever becoming a source of discord between the States—now at once forgot, or, at any rate ceased to practice that forbearance and patriotic caution which they had heretofore so religiously observed in relation to this question, and apparently from the mere habit of servile imitation, joined without reflection in the Utopian schemes of the Abolitionists and Emancipators of England, though the dire tragedy of St. Domingo, the result of the same meddling spirit, and of similar enthusiastic projects, had but recently been acted before their eyes; and seemed prepared to hazard their own liberties, and the very existence of the Union, in their new zeal for the deliverance of Africa and the regeneration of her enslaved and oppressed sons in every part of the world. We would, however, once for all adjure, them by the ancient faith which has so long bound us together as a nation, by the regard which they owe to the interests of the very people of whom they seem desirous of appearing the exclusive friends—and, above all, by the woes and miseries of the outcast portion of the race whom they have so vainly sought to rid themselves of by emancipation, and who certainly claim their *first care*—to return once more to the wise and patriotic course which they so long and so laudably pursued in relation to this subject, and to consider the well being of their fellow

citizens of the South, and the preservation of our national union and existence, as objects of more immediate interest and importance, and of far higher magnitude than any schemes, however philanthropic, for the benefit of distant countries, and portions of mankind—though these may have been imported direct from London or Liverpool, and may form the “latest fashion of the heart,” that they have received from abroad.

Let us not, like the Minstrel who gallantly burnt his harp to make a fire for his mistress, destroy through an enthusiastic devotion to a favorite project, the sacred harmony that has so long bound the starry bodies of our system in happy union. It is surely enough,

“That ranging every azure swell,

“And floating under every star,”

the flag of our country proclaims in every quarter of the world, the glories and the triumphs of Liberty. ‘The stars in their courses fight against slavery;’ and shine with a beam of promise for the African, not less than for the rest of mankind. But the present is certainly not exactly the ‘accepted time’ for stirring the subject either of his rights or his wrongs: he must be content to wait the advent of that day which we trust is not distant, when his race shall be restored to their long lost rights, and will assume the rank they may be entitled to among the nations of the earth. We are scarcely called upon to commit the peace of the Union in the cause of the Africans, any more than in that of the Greeks, or the South Americans; and it is surely absurd in us to quarrel about a subject, which it is manifest we have not even taken the trouble to understand; and which is of all others, the most dangerous that we could stir, and the last that we should have meddled with—“What madness, O! Athenians!”

We have now extended these remarks to a greater length than we at first intended, and it is time that we should bring them to a close. We deem it scarcely necessary to say, that it has not been our intention in any thing that we have said, to cast any censure on



our brethren of the North, for not occasionally selecting their statesmen, their divines, or their militia-commanders, from the class of their black fellow citizens; or for not giving their daughters to the "sooty bosoms" of the Othellos of the race. Our only object has been to point out their inconsistency in overlooking the debased and slavish condition of this miserable and depressed portion of their population, who fill their Alms-houses with paupers, and their Penitentiaries with criminals; and perversely continuing to meddle with the extraneous subject of Southern Slavery, which it is certain that they neither properly understand, nor have any right to interfere with. Deceived by the misuse of terms, or led away by the empty declamations so incessantly poured forth upon the subject, they seem unable or unwilling to perceive, that the African never can be elevated to the enjoyment of freedom, or to a state of equality with his fellow men, in any other community than in one of his own colour; that whatever may be his nominal condition, among his former masters, he must ever remain the humble and despised negro; and that he only passes from one form of bondage to another by the process of emancipation. We should certainly regard ourselves as no better than slaves if placed in his situation; and, surely, the case is no way altered in its application to the negro, by the difference of his complexion, or the circumstance of so many of his race being in a state of personal servitude. Even were the condition of the slave as bad as is supposed, and as it is represented to be, the free negro might well address him in the language of Guatamozin to his fellow sufferer, "Think not that I repose upon a bed of roses." There appear indeed, to be certain physical barriers interposed by nature between the European and the African, which no reasoning, and no human institution can ever effectually overcome; and which must forever prevent the negro from attaining to the enjoyment of freedom, or his just rights, in any other society than in one composed

of individuals of his own colour. We are sorry to be obliged to express ourselves thus unequivocally and plainly, but it is only by prosaic reasoning, and an appeal to stubborn facts, that this long misunderstood subject can be placed in its proper light; or that the intemperate zealots and the shallow meddlers, to whom it has proved an ever-inflated bag of exbilarating gas, can be brought down from the high-ropes of rhetoric and declamation, on which, with the dexterity of antics, they so readily elevate themselves, at the bare mention of the electrifying terms of freedom and slavery. Far be it from us to oppose any reasonable mode or well-devised scheme either for the present or future benefit of the unhappy sons of Africa: on the contrary, we have always given our warmest approbation to the benevolent plan of colonization—deprecating only any attempt on the part of the Government to interfere with, or become a party to the scheme. Let us, then, if it be practicable, replace the Negro on his native shore—let us restore him to the country originally assigned him by the Creator, and there assist him to better his lot and improve the condition of his race. In doing this, we shall have discharged the duty that we owe to him and ourselves; and thus, we presume, amply satisfy every claim of justice and humanity.

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THE WILDERNESS.—Part Second.

Far from the humming haunts of man I strayed,  
Where e'en the savage Hunter ceased the chase,  
As to the limits of his range arrived:  
Like Sov'ran proud in lonely palace laid,  
The painted Indian slept beneath the tree,  
(Yet of his arrowy sceptre undeprived)  
In fearless slumber, and with martial grace,  
The warlike youth reclined; tho' forced to fly,  
A Parthian shaft for his pale enemy  
He keeps; but not to conquer or to die

Now fights he, his choice but a fleeting space  
 Thus to live free, then with his name and race  
 To perish, and no more, O, Earth, ask room,  
 Or on thy bosom, or within the tomb ;  
 His native isle afar in grassy seas  
 Sequestered, active as the prairie breeze  
 The warrior left at morn, in lonely quest  
 Of game his share to gather for the feast  
 And merry dance, when next the morn shall rise  
 Above the corn, the tassell'd maizefield gay.\*  
 Yet e'en these joys he gladly would forego ;  
 For sweet revenge, a brother's blood still cries  
 From out the ground ; and even now each day,  
 Stealthy as the wild Turkey seeks her rest,  
 He creeps still nearer to his wareless foe.  
 High o'er his head blythe chirps the Redbird bright,†  
 That in the depths of sunless forests dwells  
 Coy, from the smoke of Indian town remote ;  
 Graceful his graceful form, and sweet his note,  
 As from the forest's desert tops it swells.  
 Gorgeous his vest, with tints of tropic light  
 Flaming, the season's emblem rich he glows  
 On summer's finger perched ; the sighing pines  
 O'er vasty barrens stretched, where sultry shines  
 The sun thro' the thin shade, or the green ranks  
 Of Oaks, that pall the ground with deathlike gloom ;  
 Where the Bear climbing, lops the nut-grown boughs,  
 Or the Fox robs the rich-drop'd Vine that pranks  
 The barren tree with fruits, as Fortune showers  
 Her gifts full oft upon unworthy head—  
 These are his haunts ; the bright green Paroquet,  
 And Eagle sole, those lonely heights with him  
 Divide. The Laurel here its snowy plume,  
 Like Sovereign of the forest, nods ; here swarm  
 The Lily's flowers in the waves unwet ;  
 And seem as freshly from the heavenly bowers,  
 By the star-scattering hand of Night there shed.  
 Here fall the snowy blossoms of the Bay,  
 And as with frosted silver all the ground  
 Enrich, its base and stately column round.  
 O, surely not for man who sees thee not,  
 Nor for the lower creatures, Nature say,  
 O'er hill and plain, and by each streamlet's side

\* The Green Corn Festival. † The Summer Red Bird.

‡ At the season when the Bear are lopping, that is bresking the branches of the oak, and other nut-bearing trees, for their food, the noise that they make, may be heard from a considerable distance.

Thou trailest thus thy gorgeous robes in pride,  
 And, as for jubilee, adorn'st each spot.  
 No—purer spirits here still make abode,  
 “And here we more behold the present God,  
 Than when beneath the Citron dome he stands,  
 In golden radiance wrought by Phidian hands.”  
 No—man comes but thy precincts here to stain,  
 And with rude hand to mar thy holy fane ;  
 Till he who from the sacred Porch of old,  
 The race who there their God forgot for gold,  
 Expelled, shall here so drive the grovelling crew,  
 Pierce from the sanctuary, who there still view  
 Nought but its riches, to their idol true.  
 Yes, blight sterility, and earthquake throes  
 Shall drive them forth, thro' distant lands to roam  
 With beasts of prey, and yet more vengeful foes  
 Still to contend, without or rest or home.

LINUS.

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A PICTURE OF THE SEA.

It was on a pleasant day in the month of September, that I received a notification from the Captain of a small vessel, in which I had engaged my passage for a distant port, of his intention to sail immediately. I had been delayed some days' and tho' still loth to leave home the suspense in waiting was too much to permit me to regret this hasty summons. A few moments sufficed for preparation, and I was on the waters and leaving land. We had little company beside the ship's crew, and for a long voyage the prospect of enjoyment seemed rather limited. We entered however into a manly determination to do what we could towards making ourselves agreeable to one another : and what with striding the deck, watching the fast receding land and calculating the various chances of our voyage, we got thro' the first day and night rather amicably. We were now fairly at sea. The plane of ocean became rapidly undulated;—broad swells of water lifted us on their bosoms, then sunk away from beneath, leaving us to succeeding billows. Density and space were at once before us in the mighty



bulk of ocean stretched out, and the world of vacuity above and upon it. The land no longer met our eyes, tho' strained to the utmost. The clouds came down and hung at the verge of the horizon and mingled with the surges. Not a speck besides our own little vessel was to be seen upon the vast infinity that was at once above, below and around us in its immensity. Two days went by, with scarcely any variation of this monotony of prospect. But towards the evening of the third there was a hazy red crown about the sun as he went down, a curling swell upon the black waters that seemed to rush forwards impetuously to the spot where he descended, a freshness about the wind as it sighed mournfully among the spars, and a degree of mystery that while it continued to change, still seemed to warn us to prepare for a greater change in the aspect of the ocean. The old sailors looked serious and weather-wise—and the Captain strode the deck impatiently, giving his orders in a tone that left no doubt on my mind of a perfect familiarity on the part of the old voyager with the boding countenance of sea and sky. Night came on and the wind continued to freshen—but a few stars hung out a solitary light in the sky and the clouds increased in size and blackness. We went below and ransacking our trunks furnished a pack of cards, with which, we play to the no small inconvenience of the Captain, who bade us beware, for that we were certainly bringing a storm. 'I have never seen it fail, young gentlemen,' he continued 'and I have seen it tried often in my day.' This served to amuse us the more; we had not needed this, however, to convince us that our captain was rather more given to superstition than well comported with the spirit of the age. He was a Connecticut man, deeply imbued with Cotton Mather, and all the stories of witchcraft ever conceived in the rigid country of blue lights and laws. Accordingly, he lectured us freely upon his favorite topic on which he could at times be eloquent. Believing fervently himself every word he uttered, he could not conceive the possibility of our presuming to doubt the vera-

cious histories which he volunteered for our edification; and when at length convinced of what seemed to him, our damnable heresy, he appeared to resign himself to the worst of fates, as having on board his ill-fated vessel three Jonas', each much worse than his whale-worthy name-sake of old. Our Captain's stories, however, I am free to confess, made a singular impression upon me. Not that I supposed for a single moment that the playing of any game could bring down upon us the wrath of any God, or 'hatch a fiendish form upon the deep;' but that naturally disposed to live in an element of fiction, I drank in the marvellous, as a draught, which I was originally intended to enjoy. He had accounts of the witches of Long-Island and the Sound; had seen the devil himself in shape of a pigeon in a squall off the Capes of Delaware and even in our own harbor of Charleston, had beheld the ghosts of the British, slain at Fort Moultrie, regularly on the night of the 27th June, paddling and towing into the harbor their heavy armed vessels. But his favorite story, and that which he believed as sincerely as the most authenticated passage in the Bible, was that of the Flying Dutchman, who travelled the German ocean one day and night in every month. This identical visionary he had himself seen one frosty night in December; and it was only with a great deal of exertion that he escaped, unseen by that fearful navigator, whom to be seen by, is equivalent to certain death; and it was of this dangerous companion he was to warn us at this time. We were told that the sea and almost the very part which we now travelled was that chosen by the Dutchman for the exercise of his vagaries; and a power was given for the punishment by the Almighty of all those, who, when his spirit was abroad upon the waters, dared to palter and trifle in idle games, sports, buffoonery or impiety. The voyager evidently apprehended much.—His face was enveloped in gloom, and he grew more solemn and importunate as the gale freshened, until we consented to discontinue our amusement. We arose and went upon the deck. I shall never forget the aw-

ful splendor, the gorgeous and fearful magnificence of that scene. The wind had risen in the last ten minutes to an extreme that would not permit them to hang out a rag of sail, and she was under her bare poles, driving down upon the black and boiling waters. Nothing was to be seen but the deep, gloomy and vast abyss groaning at the mighty labour of its own Titanic bulk. Now might be seen two mountains of water rolling along and gathering new accretions as they went, suddenly clashing against each other, and throwing up from the collision a tall and spiral body of foam, that for a few seconds seemed rushing down upon us, like some god of the sea bestriding the billows and directing their fury for our destruction. On we drove with a recklessness accordant with the spirit that presided over the scene. Darting through the waters, occasionally rushing beneath them, then emerging and throwing off the spray that shone upon the black and terrific picture, like the tinsel ornaments of some tyrants garb in the moment of battle, or the execution of thousands. Upon a sudden, we were arrested by a mountain of water through which the vessel labored—she burst her way at length and rushed recklessly forward, but was again met—we shipped a heavy sea—I caught by the side, as I felt myself thrown from my feet, and the water rushed over me but almost immediately dissipated, as she sprung up above them and righted—but at that moment a shriek of agony, rushed over my senses—the man at the helm had been torn away from the lashings by the relentless waters and she rolled for a moment in the trough of the sea. God! what a cry of death! The poor wretch, I beheld as I lay close to the side lift his hands and as the waters gurgled in his throat, exclaim, “God, have mercy.” It was all I heard—one more husky cry and the agony was over. Our vessel rushed by unheedingly and like a mad devil of hell endued with the animation of revenge or some other inspiring passion, went headlong upon the unreturning ocean. But the cry of the drow-

ing wretch was in my ears, and went with a cold and chilling presentiment to my heart. Despair seemed to unfix us all—the Captain was now himself at the helm, there seemed a recklessness even about him, which I could not account for, though I seemed to breathe beneath a similar influence. I felt assured we could not long survive; our vessel labored horribly—her seams groaned and opened, and the seething and hissing waters rushed in, yet she drove on, and the very violence of the billows seemed to add to their buoyancy. But amidst all this raging of the elements, there was one moment of universal calm—one awful moment seemingly afforded by the demon who presided over the storm that we might fully comprehend our situation. The feeling in this extremest moment, was the same with all on board—and one unanimous voice of prayer went up to Heaven.

It was but a moment of calm. The winds and waters went forth with redoubled violence. There seemed an impelling tempest from every point of the compass. On a sudden a broad flash of lightning illuminated the black and boiling surges. And immediately before us rushed on a large and majestic vessel. Her sails to our surprise, were all given to the wind; the figures on her decks to an immense number standing as careless and assured as in the most perfect calm, and her course to our horror, impelling her with the swiftness of an eagle directly upon us. The voice of our Captain rolled terrifically above the tempest—"The Flying Dutchman," and in a moment she was down upon us. Our fate was inevitable. I felt a sudden shock—a crash, and crew, spars, vessel and all were down rolling and writhing under the mounting and triumphant waters. I felt myself pressed in upon, hemmed round, crushed and impeded by them.

There had been no time for preparation, or prayer. The mysterious ship had passed over us, and I could see her keel with a singular facility of optical penetration cutting the green mountains with the velo-



city of an arrow, far beyond me. Around me and sinking with myself, I beheld the fragments of our vessel, together with the struggling atoms of the crew. One of the passengers and the companion whom I had been most familiar with; floated near me on a spar, just as I was about sinking. I seized upon him convulsively. The spar upon which he was supported, veered round—I placed my arm around it, and drew myself to the surface. But this promise of relief was temporary—we both discovered at the same instant that it was insufficient for the support of both, and that one of us must resign it, or we must both perish. Neither of us could prove capable of much generosity on such an occasion—our grasp became more firm, and while death was around and almost within us—while desolation enveloped every thing, and horror and terror were the only occupants of the wild domain—we were enemies—deadly—avowed enemies. The waters seemed to comprehend our situation—a swell threw us together and our grasp was mutual—my hand was upon his throat, with the gripe and energy of despair—his arms were wound about my body. I strangled him and held on till his gaspings ceased—my strength seemed that of a demon—I never withdrew my hold until by a flash of lightning, I beheld him blacker than the waves around us, and felt the blood gushing from his mouth and nostrils, upon my hands and arms. I withdrew my grasp—not so he. The paroxysm of death, had only served to confirm the hold which he had taken around my body, so that my victory was little less than defeat: as it was we were only supported by the buoyancy of the waters under the violence of their excitement, and I felt assured that a moments repose of the elements would carry both of us down together. In vain did I struggle to detach his hand from about me. It had become fastened not only around my body, but in my dress, and I resigned myself to my fate.

I had not much time for anticipation. The pain of suspense was at least spared me. The plank to which I

was rather bound than clung of my own effort settled heavily down in one of the breathing intervals between the exhaustion of one blast and the concentration of another, and without an effort I sunk in the embrace of my dead companion beneath the sullen waters, that I felt slowly close over my head—"how horrid 'twas to drown." Even in that horrible moment the vivid dream of Clarence rose to my recollection, as I realized its intense truth in my own person. I was not deprived of sense or being, although seemingly shut out from air, and pressed in all around by the vexed and heavy waters. My descent was slow but continued. I still could see to some distance in the new world into which I had perforce ventured to penetrate; and saw that I was approaching a fine gravelly bed of white sand, interspersed with large masses of rock, on one of which I finally settled. Shrinking and hiding from the violence of the storm above them, I beheld various kinds of sea animals crouching in narrow crevices, and sheltered by projections of granite and other hard substances.—They seemed too apprehensive of danger themselves to venture to attack my person; though it was evident I was a subject of much curiosity among them. On a sudden, however, as I began to apprehend their approach with voracious jaws to the attack of my person from the calm that begun to reign around me, I felt the bed of sand shrink suddenly from beneath my feet, and felt myself precipitated into a spacious and well lit apartment set round with glowing colours, columns, shells and sparkling stones. In the midst, reclining on a sofa, lay the most bewitching of the fairy race. She beckoned me to approach her. I did so—I knelt before her; she put forth her hands with the most exquisite grace, to raise me from my position. I took courage from the graciousness of her countenance and imprinted a glowing kiss upon them, when to my astonishment, she gave me such a violent blow of her fist as to precipitate me at her feet again. I felt a twinging sensation on a sudden at my nose and through my head—and

my hands and body bound in the grasp of a number of monstrous giants, summoned forth at her command. I struggled violently to release myself, and in my endeavour, removed the bandage with which they had blindfolded me, and beheld—not the palace, the giants or the beautiful fairy—but a crowd of old men and women, with a dozen smelling bottles, vigorously applying to my nostrils—and instead of a billowy mansion in the sea, a cold and uncomfortable double pew in — Church;—for the heroine of the ocean, a red-nosed looking damsel whose bonnet, in the heat of my paroxysm I had ungentily and unwittingly, torn from her head. I had never been to sea—was not drowned, and hope never to be—but the whole was a vast effort of *diablerie*, a dream, got up by the foul fiend for my exposure and mortification. So much for taking dinner with a friend, drinking my two bottles of madeira, and going to a night-meeting, when I should have gone to bed.

#### SONG OF THE IRISH PATRIOT.

Patriot, weep not, the chain that has bound her,  
The country so dear to thy heart and thy pride—  
The shackles which tyrants have woven around her  
The strong arm of freedom shall shortly divide.  
Weep not, the hour is gone by forever,  
When tears had been proper for brave men to shed;  
And now is the time for achievement or never  
When the spirit that calls, is the voice of the dead.

Your Currans, your Emmets indignantly starting,  
Now burst thro' the carments of death and arise;  
To the vigor of Freedom and E in imparting  
A spirit, that Tyranny proudly defies.  
Can their sons in their servitude shamefully slumber  
Is the spirit that glowed in their fathers no more  
No, Liberty, no—for thy champions cutnumber,  
And will die for each grain of the sand on thy shore.

Let the shout of the kindred soul, cordially flowing  
Ascend with the mighty who've sworn to be free;  
And thy sympathies grateful, to freemen bestowing  
America, wait o'er the dark rolling sea.  
And in long years to come when with freedom attended  
The green-shore of Erin shall smile on the sight  
Her prayer with the winds and the waves will be blended  
That thou may'st for ever be first for the right.

VIDAL

## A CONSIDERATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-LOVE.

THIS principle, or passion, for it does not seem determined which it is—although we are inclined to class it rather with the principles than the passions of our nature—is a strange compound, nit would appear—partaking, like every other other constituent in the moral nature of man, of a tendency at once virtuous and vicious—or, to speak more philosophically, it is made subservient to the perceptions of that faculty which partakes of the moral—approving and disapproving faculty, and which we denominate Reason. Reason, which involves Judgment, suggests to us the office of many of our moral principles; and, accordingly, self-love is that principle of our moral nature, which would seem to come very properly under the cognizance of this faculty. It is perhaps not undeserving of observation, that our passive impressions and our active principles result, alike, from this principle of self-love—a principle which, according to Adam Smith, never prompts us of itself to the sacrifice of the smallest portion of that individual good over which it is supposed to preside—a sacrifice made at the suggestion of reason, but only that we may obtain a more than proportionate advantage\*. This discrimination does not appear to us to be a just one; while it involves, we think, a confusion of ideas, which, if not properly explained, must tend to destroy all moral distinctions—and thus take from our actions their only true merit—the purity of the motive. Self-love naturally suggests to us the advantage, and, indeed, the necessity of providing against temporal wants; while it sometimes prompts us to an apparent sacrifice of our interests—a sacrifice in which our active principles are called into exertion. This sacrifice, we are told, however, usually results in the end to our advantage; and is, therefore, the suggestion of reason, which would seem here to be only another name for self-love. If we are to believe this, self-love is then the foundation of our active principles,

\* This principle is so directly at variance with M. De Stael's doctrine (and a very generous one it is) of felt relations, that we wish she had undertaken to combat it.



which are the only tests of virtue. Admit this reasoning to be true, and there would be very little encouragement left to virtue—for it would tend—even when our actions were the result of the purest motives—to deprive us of that *consciousness* which is at once the reward of virtue, and the best criterion by which we can judge of it in ourselves. Thus, however, with all his candour and ability, does the author of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* permit himself to reason; and reasoning thus, we do not see with what consistency he can venture to ask the following question: ‘Where our passive impressions are always so sordid and so selfish, how comes it that our active principles should often be so generous and noble?’ Now, according to the tenor of the writer’s own argument, these generous and noble principles resolve themselves, after all, into nothing less than this very self-love, from which he here supposes them to be so entirely exempt. This sacrifice of our passive impressions to our active principles, is nothing more than an exchange of commodities—we give up one set of interests merely that we may secure another. This may be legitimate and fair enough in politics and the business of the world; but we are not prepared to say that it is either very generous or very noble in our moral intercourse with men. Self-love is vicious, when it prompts solely to that which is calculated to benefit ourselves, with no regard to the collateral interests around us—but without, at the same time, actually violating these, as that would constitute positive crime. On the other hand, self-love is virtuous, when it leads us to the performance of actions that result in the advancement of the interests of others. This, at least, appears to be the notion of Adam Smith, when he says, that it is not the love of mankind, which prompts us to the practice of virtue—it is a stronger love of our own character. This is still self-love, although in disguise.—We practice virtue, not so much from a love of it in the abstract, but only as it may redound to our credit and advantage. If this be the true theory of our mo-

ral sentiments, then are they indeed in a very imperfect state. In the passion of love, what is it that we love? Is it beauty, or any quality with which it may be united? Or is it a mere desire, a mere appetite? If it be the latter, a mere instinct, then, so soon as the appetite was gratified, we should turn with loathing from the object. This, we know, is the case with some of our appetites, those, for instance, of hunger and thirst; and where we do *not* love, the intercourse of the sexes is equally sensual and selfish. What is it, then, that we love, and why is it that we love? Is it the particular person that absorbs the feeling, or is it the qualities, or any one of them, beauty, sense, amiability, which that person may possess? When we love, it must be for some one quality possessed by the person loved; and it seems to depend upon what that quality may be, whether the passion be virtuous or otherwise—that is, whether it be made up of, or free from self-love. If it be beauty, then is the passion only self-love modified, we shall be told. If it be either sense or amiability, why are we in love with these, or either of them? Adam Smith would answer, that it is neither the intellectual nor the moral quality that we love, at least, for its own sake, or as deserving to be loved, but that quality which may in some way or other, when called forth, tend to our interest and advantage—and here again does self-love seek its own gratification. This analysis of the principle of self-love, would sap the foundation, and strike at the root of all morality; and is very far from being countenanced by that beautiful and sublime code of moral law, which the wisest of the Ancients has bequeathed to posterity. Socrates maintained that the knowledge and the practice of virtue, were synonymous ideas, and convertible terms. This may, perhaps, have been going a little too far in the other extreme; while it appears to have been founded on a better and juster notion of the moral nature of man, than that which Adam Smith seems to have entertained. We are virtuous, according to the latter, not from a love of virtue, but because

we desire the approbation of others, which is essential to the gratification of self love. And yet, in another place the same writer observes, that it often gives us real comfort to reflect, that though no praise should actually be bestowed upon us, our conduct has yet been such as to deserve it! It would be difficult to reconcile these two passages. If it be the very definition of self-love to desire the approbation of others, and if our conduct, accordingly, be the result of this desire rather than a love of virtue, we should suppose that the want of this approbation would leave us without any satisfaction, even where our conduct has been such as to deserve it—we should thus be left without an incentive to virtue. But this would be to deny that we are ever influenced—properly so speaking—by any motives at all; and if chance directed our actions, we could not be accountable for them; nor could we derive either pleasure or pain from reflecting upon them—in which case, there could be no such thing as good or evil in the world. But then, good is educed out of evil, it will be said; although our motives be not pure, still they lead to actions in themselves so. To say, however, that our actions, be they never so virtuous, are the result not so much of a love of virtue, as of a desire of being commended for the supposed possession of it, is to make a distinction which we cannot understand. It is ‘to think too curiously,’ to say that at the very moment we are doing a good or noble action, we are influenced not by a love of that which is good or noble, but by a desire of being thought to be so influenced. Why are we desirous of the approbation of others? Because we wish to appear virtuous in their eyes. Why do we wish to appear virtuous in their eyes? Because to appear virtuous is to appear worthy and noble. Why is it noble to appear virtuous? Because virtue is something noble—and, finally, why do we wish to appear noble? Because we love ourselves. This seems to be all that we can learn of self-love.

## SUMMER NIGHT WIND.

How soothingly, to close the sultry day,  
 Comes the soft breeze from off the murmur'ing wave,  
 That breaks away in music. And I feel,  
 As a new spirit were within my veins  
 And a new life in nature. My hot frame  
 Awakes from the deep weariness, that fell  
 Upon it like a cloud of dust and heat—  
 A newer nerve, braces my weary eyelids,  
 I gaze and feel the whisperings of night,  
 Lifting the hair upon my moistened brows—  
 As if a spirit fann'd me. Slowly, at fits  
 The wind ascends my lattice, and climbs in,  
 And swells the shrinking drapery of my couch,  
 Then melts away around me. Now it comes  
 Again, and with a perfume in its wake,  
 Gather'd from spicy gardens. Some fair maid  
 Knows not who robs her roses of their sweets—  
 When, at the morn, she finds them drooping low,  
 From their nocturnal amours. Is it not  
 A gentle Providence that thus provides,  
 With odour like to this, the unfavor'd one,  
 Who else had never known it. Pleasant breeze,  
 Misfortune well may love thee. Thou hast fled  
 From gayer regions, pleasant palaces,  
 Fair groves and gardens of nice excellence—  
 To wanton with the lonely. It is meet  
 That he should rise to welcome thee.  
 Thou art most lavish, and thou should'st not steal  
 Thro' a close lattice with but half thy train,  
 When he would gather all of thee, and  
 Thy energies around him. Thou art sweet—  
 And comest with a mournful whispering  
 Among the bending trees and watchful flowers  
 That maketh a rich music for the heart,  
 Long jarr'd by restlessness and out of tone  
 From the distemper'd and oppressive heat  
 Of the long day in Summer.

I will sleep  
 Beneath my window. Thou meanwhile wilt come  
 And fan thy wings above my throbbing brow,  
 And put aside the tangles of my hair  
 With a mysterious kindness. And I know,  
 That when thou bringest me the sweets of flowers,  
 Thou'lt bear away my sighs, and bring them back  
 Laden with comforters, from fairy groves,  
 That fling away their loveliness to thee,  
 That they may win thee to the same embrace  
 Thou dost bestow upon me as I sleep.

G.

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THE following Epigram, furnished us by a friend, has, we believe never before been in print. It was written during a report which prevailed, at a time when Gen. Jackson was a candidate for office; and which was intended to injure his election.

Jackson is dead, cries noisy Fame,  
 A hard replies, that cannot be,  
 Jackson and Glory are the same,  
 Both born to Immortality.



## MODERN BIOGRAPHY.

There is perhaps no branch of modern literature, so completely systematized as the art of writing men's lives—no species of composition, that, judging by the books of the kind put forth for the last twenty years, is so little susceptible of originality or improvement. A style the most puerile, and a plan the most awkward and contemptible, seems to pervade the whole of them, not even excepting those, which, were we to judge of them by the celebrity of their authors, we might expect to find the most able and entertaining; and full of that antique raciness, which belongs so peculiarly to old books and old wine. The *vis animi* seems to have been entirely lost by some of the first spirits of the age, when they have undertaken to depict the features of those mighty dead, who still “continue to rule us from their urns.” A sort of fatality, a Bæotian fog seems perpetually of late years to hang upon this subject, antagonizing with dullness, the fairest endeavours and promises of genius. Wit no longer sparkles, truth becomes doubtful, and learning tedious, when this dangerous topic is approached. And yet, there is perhaps, no department of modern literature, more fruitful in quantity—unless it be novel and romance writing—than men's biographies. With a perseverance, deserving of more success, the Press daily pours forth, from various, and, in other respects, able hands, an immense quantity of this voluminous and puling trash. Men, unheard of before, or only known from an excess of that ambition, which, ‘tore one half of the bright stars away’; and with little other claim to public notice than its insolent and insatiate excess, are made the subjects of long biographies whom nobody knew, or cared to know, when alive. Kindly affording, by dying at last, a grateful subject to some equally unknown and ambitious scribbler; who longs to be delivered of ‘things, unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme.’ Not only do able men sink to this species of writing—at best, one in which, even success would be entitled to no very flattering distinction—but men with-

out any pretensions, save those, volunteered by a very gratifying self-opinion, which, as it blinds the possessor to the disabilities at home, also makes him deaf to the voice of the public, abroad) assist to inflict upon the good, patient and much-enduring public, their epitomes long and short, of the lives, even of the worthless and the low : seeking, in the lines of Cowper—

“ To give a deathless lot  
To names ignoble, born, to be forgot.”

There is, perhaps, no one species of modern writing, so well calculated to give pleasure to the mind, in perusal, as that which illustrates, and brings the adventures of the past, and all its associations of grandeur and romance, to the more matter-of-fact, mercantile and speculating consideration and notice of the present. We go with an unaffected and able writer, over the very ground, that the men of past ages have travelled. We see them in all the situations, in which they have been thrown by ambition, love, love of adventure, pride, or other circumstance; and from tracing, step by step, their lives, upward, from childhood to maturity and further, we necessarily acquire a sort of social interest in their adventures, in the same manner as we are interested to observe a boy of promise, growing up into usefulness and distinction, and at length confirming, by the acquirement of high and honorable station the grateful anticipations we had formed of his success. It is this peculiar feature in Biographical writing, which gives it a certain, but undefinable interest. It is because it shows forth, and images to the sight and understanding, the springs of thought which have actuated to honorable or disgraceful distinction. It is equally influential, and exercises an equal sway over our imagination, whether it speaks of the patriot or of the tyrant, the good or the bad, provided there be equal material in the fortunes of either. The life of the madman who fired Persepolis, and him, the founder of Byzantium, have a something in common, in the estimation of mankind. The motives of the two, in perform-

ing actions so widely dissimilar, we are curiously pleased to find arising from the same cause. The same desire of distinction, leading to an effect so opposite, might discover to us a singular paradox in human nature, which would be always sufficient in itself to command our attention, for the speculations of the philosopher, who may deem it of moment, (and such it must be, when it is productive of enjoyment, however slight, to men) to employ his time in such an elaborate and far extending enquiry. The numerous ramifications, to which men's motives may be, and have been pursued, must necessarily present a minutiae of difficulty, such an entangling of the many threads of human passions, affections, desires, hopes and apprehensions, that daring must be the spirit that will venture, and wonderfully capacious the mind, that will succeed in their unravelment.

Nor does our admiration or pleasure arise solely from the study of those models of antiquity, furnished us by a survey of the lives of the renowned and mighty of past centuries. Those master spirits that chained and unchained nations—that threw the bridle loosely, on the neck of ambition, and rode over cities and principedoms in ashes and in blood. More modern, and even recent eras, furnish many individuals, celebrated, not for that higher species of character, which belongs to action—although, we have not been wanting in men, who, like Napoleon, have stood, as destroying angels, wrapt in the flames of ruined empires, and triumphing, like the Spirit of Desolation, over the ruins they have made : but for the close investigation of the sciences—elaborate and profound deductions in philosophy, and those abstracter pursuits, in which the cloister has been probably more rich, than either the field or the cabinet.

Men, even those who from natural superiority, and that intenser labor, which is at once the evidence of a spirit, worthy of success in its pursuit, and most likely to attain it, are more easily dazzled by the adventures of the soldier, or the minion of fortune, who, like Cortez

has nothing to boast beyond the possession of a good toledo, and a blind and daring courage, which, as it most frequently dazzles and surprises, must necessarily claim from the dull and less venturous, that superiority which it never loses sight of itself, and which its every subsequent movement, but tends to strengthen and confirm; than by the cold and night consuming labors of the sage, whose life must be (to be as he is) without passion, or adventure. Where our historians have written at length upon the subject of the discoveries, conquests and pursuits of men, who have deserved well of their several countries, it will be found they have dwelt longest upon the lives of those whose only evidence of character, has been the utter callousness with which they have sported with human suffering and human blood, neglecting entirely, or barely adverting to, the lives of those, who have been familiar with the crucible and the furnace, the astrolabe, the screw—and to modern eyes the most horrible of all, the brassy and black letter volume of the study and cloister. It has been and we are sorry to believe is still, the desire of the time, that such *materiel* should be the subject matter of historical research, and the only portion of history necessary for a barbarous age, as we believe ours still to be. What feature is more delightful to the Savage, than that of bloodshed, and murder? The best evidence of the continuance of this quality in the reigning taste, is a necessary inference, from the fact, that such accounts are sought for with avidity, and were always first in demand.

We have been gladdened, however for the last ten years with percieving something, which we believe an earnest of a great and an improving change in the public taste. It has become fashionable, as the broad wing of science, has borne afar the energies and conquests of the human intellect, to the extremest portions of the habitable earth, to record the names, at least, of those who have sacrificed in seclusion from their fellows, the best years of their lives pursuing “the eel of science” through the muddy density which time and human ignorance had thrown



around it, a biographical notice, of some fifty pages, at furthest, usually accompanied the works of the individual who had labored, seemingly for this trifling reward. At length, with a spirit ready to do justice, the present century entered upon its existence. Innumerable were the individuals found, willing to bring themselves into public notice by a connection with one of the "living dead," as his biographer at least. And not content with devoting them a biography—a history was found insufficient to contain the many petty anecdotes of these great men. Now, this is what we have to complain of—while we fully agree that the memories of men, who have sacrificed their lives in labour for mankind—in that kind of labour too, which, as it is not calculated to win the favors of the "greasy citizens," when alive, they could not be well suspected of having sought for—should be held in esteem by such little memento's as a brief, neat and well written biography affixed to their works, or contained in some collection intended to afford them a solitary niche, however humble, in the recollections of men, from which they look down upon the struggling myriads who are to follow and at length accompany them, in an appropriation equally unpretending, yet sought for with so much admiration and avidity—we fully agree with the public in this case and to the certain extent which we have laid down as the limit to our homage and admiration, yet we cannot but think that a more idle and ridiculous system cannot be pursued, than that which renders it necessary, in order to fill a large and unwieldy volume, to rake up the most contemptible particulars of a man's life, which afford no interest to the reader and only expose the subject to an absurd familiarity which the lives of all literary men, and men of genius, have hitherto denied and avoided.

To survey the fortunes of those authors, who, like Burns, Savage, Butler, Chatterton, and others, have been suffered to perish in want and infamy by the very people for whom they labored, is to look upon a few sickly flowers, lending a painful and melancholy inter-

est to a desert waste. Their lives imperceptibly give a tinge to their writings, and the various peculiarities of their moral, may be gathered from the wanderings and fictions of their poetical natures. That such was the case with Burns and Savage, we are perpetually reminded, upon referring to their writings: with the former, whether he uttered it in the mystic and holy language of verse, or in that wayward and honest prose, for which he was so remarkable, the sorrowful and misanthropic lamentations of his cottage pride, can never be misunderstood. That it was given to him, as well as to many others, whose fortunes have been similar, to foresee the unhappy destiny which awaited him, we need nothing further than his own prophetic verses to be assured of:—and perhaps, (and human vanity and pride, said to be always strongest in minds of heavenliest tone, may confirm the idea;) the pain and presence of life was only to be desired and supportable, from the sweet and treasured whisperings of immortality, and the rich promise of a glorious being with posterity.—The anticipations of Burns, like those of the Giant Spirit, that lately followed him, seem always to have been directed to the future. With them, as well as Sheridan, (and we may say with every imaginative mind,) there seems to have been a singular averseness to the securing of the present—and perhaps a too great tendency to a co-operation with the future life. Genius is always before its time—whether in science or literature. The age is neither of nor with it. It has left it far behind, and cannot reconcile itself, to an association with it—and this is the constitution and character of true Genius. It is first to discover and the energy of pursuit is one of the strong traits by which it is known and distinguished. It is the very eye of intellect. It discovers new countries of thought. It breaks through the ice-bergs of ignorance, and advances like a northern light over the frozen temperature and foggy sky of mere ordinary knowledge. It possesses the same influence over the rugged and unpene-

trated thought, as the microscope over the insect subjected to its scrutiny—bringing out its colours—determining its outlines, adjusting its proportions, and defining its qualities and characteristics, unknown and unimagined before by the pleased and wondering time. Yet the power, whose agency is so minute and extensive, is most frequently the subject of a scrutiny as nice and particular.

The herd of admirers that assemble to witness the triumph of talent, have each the history of the hero. In events of strong character, battles, bloodshed, fire and miscellaneous devastation, there is quite enough for the narrator in passing. Such men live out of doors. To make up their histories, it is by no means necessary to see them at home. Sometimes, however, the impertinent curiosity of a biographer has ventured even thus far, and we know what were the dreams of Calphurnia, the night before the murder of Cæsar; and that in the latter days of Rome, the ladies committed some laws and regulations for the senate. Sometimes, too we have been permitted to hear of a brave Athenian, submitting on his return home, with a laudable and praiseworthy patience to a Billingsgate reception from his spouse; but this is quite as far as the old moralists have presumed to inquire; contenting themselves with a laconic account of the battle, and how the hero bore himself, his wounds, death, and the number of his hecatombs. With those, whose triumphs have not been in the field—the case must of necessity be one of more difficulty, as it is quite different. Literary men, and men of genius, have nothing in their lives, of that bold featurings, which the vulgar denominate incident.\* Every thing, beyond what they, themselves, have given to the world—particularly, that which may belong, not to their labors, but, to their lives—must be searched for, with a scrutiny, that, while it may lead to a few meagre particulars, ne-

\* One or two exceptions, if such they may be considered, will be found in the lives of Byron and Campbell. The events of the former's life have been long known. That of the latter, is said, to have been also singularly marked. He was a traveller, and saw in Germany the seeking of a city. But these are not the kind of material, which would guarantee the exception.

cessary to the elucidation of some apparent inconsistencies, common to great minds, will oftener tend to the discovery of those vices or irregularities, which, as they are thrown in immediate contrast with, must necessarily blot and disfigure the fairest trophies of virtue and intellect.

In the Pope and Bowles controversy, this fact with the evil reprobated, immediately appears. Circumstances long forgotten, and, until latterly, never looked upon as legitimate objects of inquiry are brought to light, and at a time when the lapse of many years, has served to dim and obscure them—when there is no longer either contemporary, agent, or witness, surviving; and particulars, from their very minuteness and individuality assume not merely a plausibility of appearance, but even the stubbornness and certainty of truth. Have men any more right to inquire into the domestic habits and moral peculiarities of an author, than those of a mere citizen, who, beyond the practice of his profession, has nothing, by which he might be considered an object for such discussion and inquiry? We know not that they have? We cannot conceive it proper, in the most liberal state of morals that they should have. It may be argued, and perhaps truly, that where an author, makes his own life, the subject matter of his publications, a right would be possessed by every purchaser to descant upon them with the most perfect freedom. But even in such a case, we should unhesitatingly say, he has no right to go beyond, or seek for further material than that which has been permitted him by his purchase. But authors do this but seldom, and it is enough, that except in that which their own act has made public, they are essentially, and in every particular entitled to the immunities and security afforded by society, to the humblest individual in it.

The practice of writing, what we may here designate anecdotal biography—consisting, not of a regular outline of a man's visible life, but of a collection of pictures, representing him in all the various attitudes



he has thought proper to assume, even in the sacred and social circle, began (although, it is to be found here and there dispersedly throughout the body of English literature at an earlier period) with James Boswell : and certainly, were we to be required to select from the body of literary pretenders furnished by that and after times, we should not be able to find one, in our opinion, more aptly fitted to attend on the walks and wanderings, excursions, frolics, *soirees*, brutalities or misgivings of genius.\* He is docile as a dog, watchful as a cat, imitative as a monkey, and hungry, mean, and cowardly as a Jackal. He puts up with all that is said or done to him. It is a kindness to jeer him ; and were it possible to look love while beating, he would be proud of the occasional bastinado. He toils like a slave for his provender—submits to the total loss of the energy and spirit of a man, for the petty anecdote, with which he rushes to his note book, swells it out to a volume, and keeps the filthy imposthume gathering, impatient, until his victim dies, when the mountain is broken for the crowd, and the mouse creeps forth, to the pride and self-approbation of this author, whose only road to distinction, lies through the dunghill of another man.—This man, while in his biography of Johnson, he succeeded better than man had ever done before, in gratifying the vitiated taste of a vicious public, had the doubtful satisfaction of knowing, that, had *he* been of sufficient importance, it might have convinced him, by its immediate application to himself of its injurious tendency. Thomas Moore, in his life of Sheridan, (the only instance we quote, though many are at hand) has, perhaps, done much, by the trifling and puling prettinesses and particularities of that work, to sicken the public of the potion which their own licentiousness originally encouraged and brought into familiar use. We do not know how to divest ourselves of the idea, so forcibly impressed upon us by the previous course of our reflections upon this subject, that there is something of meanness in the plan pursued by this gentleman,

\* See Peter Pindar's *Bozzy* and *Piozzy*.

in the discussion he has been pleased to volunteer upon the probable practice of the unfortunate subject of his memoir, in preparing with much previous labor, the various bon-mots educed by the lively and convivial assembly, and vending them there as original, and extemporaneous. To support this, we have brought before us, detached scraps of paper, covered with these precious morceaux, in their chrysalis state, fully proving in the mind of his Biographer, his habit in this respect. Now it had been charity, whatever might have been the weight of evidence against it, so long as a possibility or doubt remained, to have believed that these scraps were only retained from memory after their original use, possibly with the view to their decoration of future labors in the dramatic world—a purpose for which they were admirably fitted, and to which, in fact, many of them have been applied. We do not know, however, that Mr. Moore is so much to blame, as the public for whom he caters. At the best, though a man of unquestionable genius, he is but a bookmaker, and will certainly provide such material, as will best satisfy the public demand. That the desire of the community for this precious sort of reading is such we have no need to refer beyond the daily additions to our bookstalls and libraries. We have Boaden's balderdash about Kemble and Siddons, and his recollections, forsooth, of his contemporaries. A mere hanger on of the Theatres—who made playbills and sometimes farces—was a regular attendant at the Manager's dinner, and an inveterate toad eater and proser. Then comes Leigh Hunt's Kelly's, Dallas', Parrys, Medwins and a host of others, all of the same stamp and character. These lacqueys of literature, are the veriest espials in creation. Nothing escapes them. They sneak every where—pry in every corner—know what particular kind of meats you prefer—at what house your wines are bought—their age—whether they are Burgundy, Madeira or Port—will have a scandal ready for your wife and daughter—rake up your boyish excesses, bind them on to your old

age, nor let that wholly escape them. They will pursue you to your study—ascertain if the source of your inspiration, be gin and water, tea, opium or coffee—deny you honesty, truth, virtue, forbearance, every thing—but interest. As Scott says :

“Peep in your bath, and God knows where beside,  
And then in so even accents, speak your doom,”

What must be the state of morals, character and taste, among a people who require this kind of literary aliment. Who find it necessary to ransack the private archives of genius for those extravagancies, we dare not even call them excesses, to which all men, and particularly warm impassioned and creative men are peculiarly liable. Those extravagancies, which, however tainted with earth, have still a lofty something about them, that repels vulgarity, while they possess an acknowledged supremacy over the vices of more ordinary mortals. And why above all men, is it that the talented and informed, are selected for this nice and particular scrutiny? Is it because we have a natural tendency to dispossess superiority of some of its hereditaments? Must an agrarian law, level the mental wealth of the few, to the barrenness and poverty of the many? Do we hold genius as that sun which we cannot gaze upon unblinded, and inspect only through a soiled and darkened medium? Or do we conceive, that by clouding one planet, we render another more apparent?—and by detracting from others, whom we feel assured we can never approach, we thus fondly imagine we have lessened the distance between us.

It may be well to remark, the singular caution observed by all the ancient historians, upon topics of this character. Plutarch, who may be considered a model, as well for the searching philosophy of his mind as for a certain tact, which above all other writers he seems to have possessed, appears to be above that prying and searching into the minutiae of domestic being, which is the common character of all our modern biographies.

He does not appear to think it necessary, that the

public should learn, whether the stylus was blunted, or sharp with which the censor wrote; nor does he seem to consider it a matter of the highest importance that his reader should know that the tablet on which his thoughts assumed their first form was frequently defaced with the free use of the file or covered with that *cancelli* work at once the evidence of a certain degree of barrenness and of laudable perseverance and labor. The Greek in his unbending simplicity and sternness would have blushed at such a character. He would have looked upon the domestic habits and domestic gods, as under a particular sanction and security, and sacred from the inspection of profane and idle curiosity. In this quality of education and pride we must at once acknowledge our inferiority. The desire of learning the every nothing of a great man's life, is little less than the wretched curiosity of an old woman, who has made it the only business of a long, and therefore unprofitable life, to peep into the privacies of her neighbours, and vend the result of her inquiries to an illiterate and attentive circle, whose avidity to learn, in this particular, fully entitles them to the benefit of the moral adage, "the receiver is as bad as the thief."

The character of genius, thus brought into familiar contact with our daily habit, is lessened of its shadowy and majestic proportions. The cloud of mystery which it made loftier than others, being removed, we gladly discover it as little in the practices of life as ourselves, and thus fondly imagine that there is something gained towards an equality. We seem to forget that the attributes of genius are as far apart from its necessities—we had almost said, nature, as our wants and requirements are averse to our destinies. It is by no means necessary that the novelist or the poet should be the character of his creation, or appear in the bewildering scene his fertile genius images forth to the understanding; nor is it necessary that he should be peculiar in those little performances of a nature liable to the same wants, and subjected to the same infirmities



as our own. Where then, is the necessity of preparing costly books, from materials so common? Richard Brinsley Sheridan, to speak in poet-phrase, was foolish enough to allow himself to "be smitten with the darts of love"—there are few idle young men, who are not, at certain seasons, equally culpable. He fought a duel—God knows, the practice is 'familiar as our garter!'—he scribbled verses—he is not the only unfortunate stripling, guilty in the very manner, of this evil and dangerous habit. He neglected to pay his debts, and the only matter in which he differed from thousands in this common, but important particular, was, in that happy knack, which he possessed at his tongue's end, of satisfying the clamorous tradesman and importunate actress. Now, bating some few peculiarities of character, some few incidents rather out of the ordinary run of such things—and what is left either new or interesting in the life of Sheridan, as given by his biographer, to warrant a large octavo volume, of four or five hundred pages?—A man professedly averse to study, inquiry, or the vital principle of all endeavour, a fixed and undeviating pursuit of one object, is scarcely capable of fixing the attention of any community, however small, through a long season or a long book. We sometimes do find some knave, like the celebrated Barrington—or impudent fop, like the equally celebrated Brummell, commanding through sheer dexterity or impudence the attention of Princes, Lords and Ladies. But the fop finds his level, the rogue his rope, and the public in a very short season of longer follies, find out a summary mode of forgetting both.

Perhaps (to diverge a moment from our immediate subject) the only great peculiarity in the life of Sheridan, was an uncommon degree of poetical enthusiasm, with little of the poet. It was not the mania, nor any extravagant ambition to be considered a character, which he could not be, but a genuine sensation and enjoyment of the poetic phrensy, without the ability to

bestow the fruits of his inspiration upon others. He felt poetry, but did not write it—he was too much of the dreamer, to put his dreams to paper, and so the fire was kindled and burnt out only within him :

“ Many are poets, who have never penn’d  
 Their inspiration, and perchance the best :  
 They felt, and loved, and did, but would not lend  
 Their thoughts to meaner beings, they compress’d  
 The God within them and rejoined the stars  
 Unlaurel’d upon earth.”

He was an Improvisatore in every sense of the word—and in after years a too great reliance on his “ fatal facility” of tongue—a facility which never deserted him upon any emergency, may be said to have occasioned those embarrassments which gathered about the evening of his days, like clouds at the setting of the Sun, and finally contrived to crush and conquer him.

In closing these remarks, after an attentive perusal of the Biography to which they have chiefly been directed, we are struck with a fact rather remarkable, as standing widely opposed to that character of liberality and patronage which the English nation daily arrogates to itself, where ever talent or merit is concerned. We know of no modern State or Country, nor does the history of past times afford us an instance of any one nation permitting the claims of merit or genius to be so neglected as Great Britain. What was remarkable, and a fact of singular occurrence in Italy and the Tuscan provinces, such as Dante’s exile, and Tasso’s confinement, and therefore much wondered at, was of daily instance in this self-bigotted, and infatuated country—which, if it did not sin by its own positive act and legislation in this way, was guilty of an offence, little less pardonable, in the neglect and passiveness with which it beheld those master spirits from whom its character as a literary nation is wholly derived, either starve with hunger by the way-side, or by an occasional ostentation of generosity, choke the improvident pauper to whom they throw the long withheld guinea, which finally comes too late, either for the good

of the hungered, or the character of liberality, which the donor has thought proper to assume. The poor wretch dying in this manner, will be rewarded with a bust and biography—and he who was allowed to perish of hunger when alive, will be fed with a lavish homage when dead, as “empty as the bones that rot.”

“Look, wretched one, upon the stream that rolleth around the dwelling of thine old age, and thou wilt there see the very stars that have shone upon thee in thy boyhood.”—From the Arabic Evening Song of Sadi.

#### THE STARS.

I love to watch the Stars. They bring me back  
To the sweet haunts of childhood. And returns  
That I had long forgotten. Scarce a scene,  
Of boyish prank, or merriment, but comes,  
With all the freshness of the time, as if  
It were a passing thing of yesterday:  
The green, remember'd at the winter night,  
For the encounter of the rapid ball—  
The marble play, the hoop, the top and kite,  
Each in its regular season, has its time  
In the revival of my boyhood then.  
And as the years flew by—as I became  
Warmer and more devoted, fix'd and strong,  
Growing in the affections, when I ceased  
To grow in stature, or proportion, then,  
When life, in all its fullness, darted by—  
And voices grew into a spell, and eyes  
Were stars, which led the sympathies;  
And older men were monitors, too dull  
For passionate youth; and reason, and all excellence,  
(Bating the honed sentences of lips,  
That may have vied with coral, and have won)  
Were to be gather'd from one source alone,  
Whose thought and word was inspiration, life,  
That we had bartered life itself to lose—  
And that heart-madness, that belongs to youth,  
That spell upon affection, that deep light,  
Which makes all other objects dark, or fills,  
Absorbs, and crushes out each other light,  
Is round us as a dream—that binds us down  
And takes our reason from us—when all these  
Have been with us and carried us away  
To strange conceits of future happiness,  
But to be thought on as illusions all—  
Yet such illusions as we still must love,  
But which experience, warns us not to hear;  
When these have parted from us—when the sky  
Hath lost the charm of its ethereal blue,

When the Nights lose their freshness and the trees,  
 No longer have a welcome sound for love ;  
 And the moon wanes to a paler bright—  
 And all the poetry that shook the leaves,  
 And all the perfume, that was on the flowers—  
 Sweetness upon the winds, light in the sky,  
 The green of the carpeted valley, and the dew  
 That Morning hangs on the enamelled moss—  
 The hill side, the acclivity and plain—  
 (Sweeter than Solitude was sleeping there)—  
 Are gone, as the last hope of misery ;—  
 When the one dream of thy deluded life  
 Hath left thee to awaken, not to see  
 The pleasant morning, but the gloomy night,  
 When life becomes a weariness, and thou  
 No longer gatherest from thy barren path,  
 One flower of comfort—when disease is nigh,  
 And all thy joints are racking, and thy thought  
 Is of foul, nauseous, ineffectual drugs,  
 Which thou wilt take altho' thou know'st in vain,  
 And not a hand is there to quench thy thirst  
 With one poor cup of water, and thy thought  
 Is of the fading sky, and the bright sun,  
 Which thou art losing ; and the sable pall  
 And melancholy carriage, and of those  
 Who but acquire thee now, when thou art lost,  
 And only weep for that, which thou dost leave—  
 And thou hast bid adieu to earthly things,  
 And offer'd up thy prayer of penitence,  
 Doubtful of its acceptance—and prepared,  
 As well as thy condition will admit,  
 For the last change of thy unhappy life,  
 And the cold mansion and the narrow house—  
 Look, if thou canst, from thy closed lattice forth,  
 On the old sky, and if the stars be there,  
 Then will the current of thy thoughts flow back  
 To the fair practice of thy innocent childhood,  
 And if thou hast been wretched, thou wilt weep  
 Over thy recollections—and thy tears  
 Will be as a sweet pray'r, sent up to Heaven.

W. G. S.

#### PATRIOTISM FOSTERED BY EDUCATION.

Nature herself, in connecting the glory of individuals with the aggrandizement and fame of their country, sanctions and consecrates the noble sentiment of patriotism, and points out to the Legislator and the Statesman, the policy of directing their chief care to the great object of cultivating this salutary principle and of fostering it by appropriate institutions ; and of all the means that can be employed for this purpose, there is none so effectual as that of education.



The Course of Time, a poem in Ten Books. By Robert Pollok, A. M. New York, 1828.

In the first number of this Gazette, we appropriated, in passing, a note of some three or four lines to Mr. Pollok, touching his 'Course of Time'—and considered the notice a sufficiently ample one. We still think as we then did; but as the opinion expressed in that note, upon the merits of this egregious and perfectly gratuitous Poem, has been called in question, we are neither unwilling nor unable to show, that it was founded upon an attentive perusal of most of the pages in each book of the formidable "Ten," comprised in Mr. Pollok's volume—a not inconsiderable achievement; and for which, in the course of time, we can anticipate but an inadequate reward. Before we go further, we cannot refrain from putting the Boston critics upon their guard, by informing them that we are neither an Attorney, we beg their pardon—a "Lawyer," nor a "middle aged man"—although we should, perhaps, have no objection to be the one, and must unavoidably become the other at some future day. Having premised thus much, we shall now proceed with the work before us, and hope to despatch Mr. Pollok's "ten books" in half that number of pages. In the first place, then, we deny—and it has been unequivocally assumed, by implication, at least—that Mr. Pollok's "Course of Time" has any claims to the honor of being considered an "Epic"—it has neither beginning, middle, nor end; it has, properly speaking, no "argument;" it has no history, no plot, and no fable, and, consequently, no catastrophe; it has no agency, active or passive, divine, human, or infernal. Lacking as it does these, the immortal honor—rather equivocal at best, in this age of metrical orthodoxy, and the mere namby pamby of our very lady-like imaginations—of having produced a work which shall vie with those of the

"Three poets in three distant ages born,"

can no longer be claimed for Mr. Pollok, we should suppose, either by his friends in England, or his more indiscreet admirers in this country. In taking this

ground, which neither of the above parties, we should think, will venture to dispute, we have got rid of the unwelcome task which must otherwise have devolved upon us, of penning a disquisition upon the principles of the *Epopœa*; and, accordingly, of passing judgment upon Mr. Pollok's ten books, as he may have abided by, or departed from these *lex scripta*, or Epic canons; while his poetical merits must have remained a distinct subject for consideration—whereas, they now constitute the sole ground upon which we propose to consider his *Course of Time*. Under this head then,

*The Poetical merits of Mr. Pollok,*

we shall proceed to discourse of the work before us, which has been said to contain 'some of the finest poetry under Heaven'—the heaven of poetry is here, by implication, admitted to be above Mr. Pollok and his "poem"—and to this we shall not demur. The first and chief objection we have to urge under the head here, prescribed to ourselves, is, that the "*Course of Time*" is neither *poetry* nor *verse*. There is, we admit, the poetical diction, and the ten syllables, with the occasional Alexandrines—and conscientiously speaking, the admission involves the only praise we have to bestow upon the "production of a young gentleman at College"—although the fact has been most gratuitously assumed. Had Mr. Pollock ever read Dean Swift's verses on a "Broomstick," he could not, we should think, have fallen into the error of supposing, that thoughts clothed in a poetical garb merely, however fine in themselves they might be, were alone sufficient to constitute true poetry. The latter is never to be mistaken. The "*poeta nascitur*," the only true poet, is always capable of achieving the reverse of this; and by the tone and style of his *expression*, will impart a grace to, and not unfrequently invest with grandeur, conceptions quite upon a level, perhaps, with the most ordinary intellect. If his subject suggest not "thoughts that breathe," he will never fail to furnish you, at least, with "words that burn." We must be pardoned these trite re-

flections, seeing that critics and readers, alike, have been led astray by Mr. Pollok's *phraseology*, which, as we have just said, from being occasionally poetical, and uniformly full and flowing, though never rising above a certain level, has seduced them into the belief that what they read must needs be poetry :

—'Tis to create, and in creating live  
A being more intense, that we endow  
With form our fancy, gaining as we give  
The life we image."

This is the true definition of poetry, by a true poet, who felt what he wrote—for truth is very nearly allied to feeling. We have said, that Mr. Pollok's "ten books" consist neither of poetry nor verse; and having thus assumed the onus probandi, we shall proceed to show, 1st, that it is not poetry, and, 2nd, that it is not verse. In proving our first point, we shall have recourse to Milton's blank verse, of which it is only necessary to read ten lines, to perceive at once the difference and the distance between the ten syllables of Mr. Pollok, and the truly Epic grandeur of the lofty verse of the *Paradise Lost*. The reader will be so good as to bear in mind, that the admirers of Mr. Pollok have not scrupled to compare his "Course of Time" with that poem; we shall meet them, therefore, on their own ground, without thinking it necessary to beg pardon of the shade of the Divine Bard, for presuming to bring his immortal labours, not into comparison, but contrast with the vox et preterea nihil, of the author of the "Course of Time." Mr. Pollok's first book opens with an invocation to a Muse, which he expressly desires may be one

— "Not overfraught with sense."

This opening, bating a partiality never, we believe, expressed before, is in evident imitation of Milton, whose object, he tells us, is, to

— "assert eternal Providence."

Mr. Pollok is solicitous to

— "utter as 'tis  
The essential truth—  
— Providence approved."

The work, by the way, ends precisely as it begins, after having

"Rolled its numbers o'er the track of man ;"

that is, the last book closes with the identical lines with which the first opens ; and we shall proceed to quote them, as it is evident, from the repetition, that the author entertained no mean opinion of them—here they are :

"The thought and phrase, severely sifting out  
The whole idea, grant—Time gone, the Righteous saved,  
The wicked damned, and Providence approved."

Mr. Pollok desires here, that he may be able to "sift the idea," and the *whole* idea, too, out of—what ? The subject ? No—the "thought !" This extracting, or "sifting" of an "idea" out of a "thought," is a process, we must acknowledge, entirely new to us, but the "thought" it seems, is not sufficient for this purpose—the "phrase" too, is put in requisition, in order to contribute to the more complete and perfect extrication of the "idea !" It appears, notwithstanding this, that Mr. Pollok was an "A. M."—but where did he acquire his metaphysics ? At Christ Church, or at Brazen Nose ? Probably at both. But we have to give the conclusion of the work, which, as we have said, is in the very words of the beginning:

"Thus have I sung beyond thy first request,  
Rolling my numbers o'er the track of man,  
The world at dawn, at midday, and decline :  
Time gone, the Righteous saved, the wicked damned,  
And God's eternal government approved."

Having thus, without any apparent scruples of conscience, "damned the wicked," Mr. Pollok closes his "Course of Time" with the air of a man entirely satisfied with himself—and such people enjoy their satisfaction with very peculiar relish. Let us now contrast—since we have been put to it—Mr. Pollok's description of "Chaos," we presume it is, with that contained in the second book of the *Paradise Lost*. We shall place Milton's description first, as he has been long accustomed to precedence, and that too, of a far higher sort than the one we give him here :

"Before their eyes in sudden view appear  
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark  
Illimitable ocean, without bound,



Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,  
And time, and place are lost; where eldest night  
And Chaos, ancestors of nature, hold  
Eternal anarchy, amidst the roar  
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.

Into this wild abyss,  
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,  
The wary Fiend

Stood on the brink of hell, and looked awhile,  
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow strith  
He had to cross.

At length a universal hubbub wild  
Of stunning sounds and voices all confused,  
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear  
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,  
Undaunted to meet there whatever power  
Of the nethermost abyss  
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies  
Bord'ring on light; when strait behold the throne  
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread  
Wide o'er the wasteful deep; with him enthroned  
Sat sable-vested night, eldest of things  
The consort of his reign.

But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven  
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night  
A glimmering dawn; —————  
And fast by hanging in a golden chain  
This pendent world, in bigness as a star  
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.  
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
Accursed, and in a cursed hour he hies!

In this description, the reader who "hath music in his soul," will not, we are convinced, fail to perceive the fine force of some of the lines—such, for instance, as, "The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark illimitable ocean, without bound;" and, "the womb of nature and perhaps her grave;" together with the last, "accursed, and in a cursed hour he hies"—that poetical abstraction, as it were, of the occasional thought from the immediate subject, as though the wing of the Bard, tired of hovering as if enchained along a dead level,

"Springs upward like a pyramid of fire;"

or takes a long and melancholy flight, which, like that of the Bird of Paradise, would know no end. These are the lines which afford texts and illustrations to all minds in all ages—forming, as it were, a link of that electric chain which vibrates in every bosom not dead to the higher and holier impulses of the "Divinity that stirs within us." We remember to have been particularly struck, some few years

ago, with an observation touching Sheridan Knowles's play of *Virginius*, that there was not a single line in it that was "quotable," although it was effective in the acting. The same remark—and the force of it can hardly be mistaken—may be applied, without exception, to the whole ten books of Mr. Pollok's "*Course of Time*;" and confirms, more strongly than any argument that we could have adduced of our own, the truth of what we set out with maintaining, viz. that Mr. Pollok's self-styled "poem," was not poetry. Those fine fancies that are perpetually recurring to the mind;

"Those thoughts that wander thro' eternity,"

those never-to-be-mistaken inspirations of true poetry, which it is impossible to define or describe, and which we can only feel,

"Such as when winds and harpstrings meet,  
And take a long unmeasured tone  
To mortal minstrelsy unknown,"

are no where to be met with in Mr. Pollok's pages. But we must now lay before our readers his description of *Chaos*, in which they will hardly fail to perceive the imitation, not merely in the structure of the verse, but the inversion and transposition of words—always forcible and effective in Milton—together with the words themselves:

Equipped and bent for heaven, I left yon world,  
My native seat, which scarce your eye can reach,  
Rolling around her central sun, far out  
On utmost verge of light; but first to see  
What lay beyond the visible creation  
Strong curiosity my flight impelled.  
Long was the way and strange. I passed the bounds  
Which God doth set to life, and light, and love;  
Where darkness meets with day, where order meets  
Disorder dreadful, waste and wild; and down  
The dark, eternal, uncreated night  
Ventured alone. Long, long on rapid wing  
I sailed through empty, nameless regions vast,  
Where utter nothing dwells, unformed and void.  
There neither eye, nor ear, nor any sense  
Of being most acute, finds object; there  
For ought external still you search in vain.  
Try touch, or sight, or smell; try what you will,  
You strangely find nought but yourself alone.

The last line in this passage, was no doubt intended to be very sublime; but surely it was superfluous, to say the least of it, to inform us that "you

strangely find nought but yourself alone," in a place where we had just been told, that "utter nothing dwells?" This phrase of "utter nothing," which was probably considered as the finest touch in the picture, is sheer nonsense—you detect in it that feeble fury, which is the sure indicative of a bald imagination, that seeks by forced conceits to supply the want of those "thick coming fancies," that visit only the man of true genius; as certain old gallants have recourse to acids and alkalis, in lieu of the natural warmth. But Mr. Pollok is not content with this never-before-heard of, and unpardonable use of the Prosopopœa, by which space, or vacuity, is constituted into a sort of actual and personal presence, but he must proceed to give it "a local habitation and a name"—affording, thus, a literal and downright illustration of that "fine phrenzy" which Shakspeare supposes capable of an achievement of the kind, but which, after all, was nothing more than a fine fancy of the poet's. "Utter nothing dwells," it seems—but where? only, we suspect, in Mr. Pollok's pages. The whole phrase and figure are a miserable misconception and perversion of thought and language. In the first place, space is not a nonentity, but something positive, though not tangible. There is, in fact, no such thing as "Nothing"—the idea involves an absurdity. If there be any such thing as 'Nothing,' it exists no where—and how can that be said to be, which has no existence? We dare say, however, that some of Mr. Pollok's Athenian friends and admirers in London,

"And classic" Boston, "much renowned for Greek,"

will be able to set us right, by explaining this difficulty. Immediately succeeding this passage, is one descriptive of a "monstrous beast," that 'grasped

Malignantly what seemed a heart, swollen, black,  
And quivering with torture most intense  
And still the heart, with anguish throbbing high,  
Made effort to escape, but could not; for  
Still the monstrous beast with sting of head  
Or tail transpierced it, bleeding ever more."

The idea, in this passage, of a sort of disembodied heart "quivering in torture most intense," and

trying to escape, as was very natural, the "monstrous beast" is an improvement, we shall probably be told, upon the description of hell, in the *Paradise Lost*. We much doubt whether Milton would have considered it such. The latter, by a few brief touches—his "four infernal rivers," the "fierce extremes" of heat and cold, together with "the slow and silent stream, the river of oblivion"—affords us some conception, if conception we can have any at all, of a 'place appointed for the wicked;' but what do we gather from Mr. Pollok's description? He seems to dwell with a ferocious exultation, upon the 'writings infinite,' and 'complicated foldings' of the 'monstrous beast;' and dilates so much upon the image, that, while we turn from it in disgust and weariness, we are tempted to recur to Virgil's judgement upon the elder Cato—in other words, we should be sorry to be compelled to appear at the bar of Mr. Pollok's retributory conscience.

The truth is, that both the idea and the language in the above passage, are precisely such as we should have expected from Joanna Southcott, or the Rev. Mr. Edward Irving, or some itinerant Methodist preacher, who, like the reverend gentleman, should find it pleasant to discourse to his hearers of 'drowning souls.' On the next page—for Mr. Pollok seems to have 'supped full of horrors'—we have an account of a "being pierced through *soul* and body!" Mr. Pollok makes the soul, here, a perfectly tangible thing, in bold defiance of all spirituality; and the learned and ingenious disputes to which the question has so often given rise. The "New arrived," who is one of the three persons, we beg pardon—"sons of bliss" and "citizens of heaven"—to whom we are introduced in the opening of the work, is pleased to favour us with a "twice told tale" of his "equipment bent for heaven." It is to an "ancient bard," that he tells this story for the second time, who speaks in his turn, and consoles the "new arrived" with the assurance, that of all that he shall hear, "the meaning still with easy apprehension he shall take;" and that



"every word that each to other speaks, though *never heard before*, at once is *fully understood*." This assurance must have been of exceeding comfort to the "new arrived;" and we have only to regret, that we, poor short-sighted mortals that we are—have not been similarly favoured. We have omitted to mention the singularly bold request with which Mr. Pollok sets out. On page 6, he says, 'Hold my right hand, Almighty!' Milton has been accused of blasphemy—but what shall we say of this extraordinary request of Mr. Pollok's? On the bottom of the same page, the 'Saints' are represented very quietly 'coming home' of an evening!

We shall now proceed to notice the—we really do not well know what to call it—shall we say the picture, with which Mr. Pollok has presented us of the moral failings and mental infirmities of Lord Byron? This picture, as our readers no doubt well remember, has been repeatedly copied and highly extolled, as evincing the hand of the master, and as depicting to the life the moral and mental features of the august original—in other words, the passage has been abundantly quoted and praised, as containing all that could be said upon the subject, together with some of the finest poetry in the volume.

We think we shall be able to show, that it is, without exception, the most superlative bombast, and profound absurdity, that ever issued from a mind even tolerably sane. The rant and extravagance of some of the passages in Lee's play of Alexander the Great, are still redeemed by occasional bursts and flashes of genuine poetry—much fervour, and many fine fancies—for he had drank of the true Hippocrene; and, though laboring under mental alienation, we may borrow the allusion, and say, that the temple was still inhabited, though the Deity was sometimes from home. Let us now see what we can make of the following passage about Lord Byron. It commences with informing us, that the noble poet, 'not content with ancestral fame,' but 'gazing higher, proposed in his heart to take another *step*.' This

'step' was, it seems, in the direction of the 'mount of song.' To attain this, we are told that 'no cost was spared.'—'What books he wished, he read: what sage to hear, he heard: what scenes to see, he saw.'

These 'scenes' are then enumerated in very nice detail:

"He cities saw, and courts, and princely pomp;"

extraordinary scenes, certainly, and highly edifying they must have been—was Mr. Pollok so unfortunate as never to "see a city?" Lord Byron's "musings" are next enumerated. "He *mused* on mountain brows; and *mused* on battle-fields; and *mused* on ruins grey with years; and *mused* on famous tombs; and on the waves of ocean *mused*; and on the desert waste: *the heavens, and earth of every country saw!*"—This was, as it were, the last gradation of his 'musings,' as it is the very climax of Mr. Pollok's account of them here. He 'saw the heavens, and earth of every country saw'---Heaven and earth! we may well exclaim. But Lord Byron did *not* "see the earth of every country."—His migrations had been by no means so various nor extended, as we believe he once proposed they should have been. We do not know that he was ever north of the Danube; in Europe, his travels seem to have been confined to the south; and as to Asia, we believe he got as far as the imagined site of "the city of a ten years seige"—that is, a little, and only a little, west of a portion of the waters that separate Europe from Asia. He never was in Africa, though he may have had some glimpses of her north-eastern shores; and he was never in America. Then there are the other two *new* quarters of the globe—new, according to the French geographers—*Australasia* and *Polynesia*, which were, to the hour of his death, entirely new to him. It thus appears, that of the six quarters of the world, Lord Byron may have travelled over the half, or something like it, of one; and, possibly, the greater part of another—leaving him an entire stranger to the remaining four. With what truth then, has Mr. Pollok ventured tell us, that he "saw

the earth of every country?" But let us proceed with the passage before us. Having dismissed the subject of Lord Byron's "musings," Mr. Pollok touches next upon that of his Muse :

"As some vast river of unfailing source,  
Rapid, exhaustless, deep, his numbers flowed,  
And opened new fountains in the human heart."

A "river" is here represented, as "opening a fountain!" If this be a fact, it is quite a new one in natural history; and the honor of having made an addition to that department of knowledge, has thus, it would seem, been reserved for Mr. Pollok. But we confess, we have hitherto been taught to believe differently—though, to be sure, we may be wrong. We were always under the impression, that fountains were the sources of rivers, not rivers of fountains. The mistakes of poets in natural history, have been repeatedly pointed out; but they have usually been very pardonable ones—while for this of Mr. Pollok's, of a "river opening a fountain," we really do not see what apology can be found.

Next—a few lines below, only—we are told that Lord Byron '*stooped to touch* the loftiest thought!' Now, how, in nature, could he have done this—we say nature, for we know of no *mental* process by which he could have achieved a feat of this sort. In thus "stooping to the loftiest thought," too, it is to "*touch*" it! Are thoughts then tangible? But this is only a small addition to the list of Mr. Pollok's discoveries. In "stooping" to this "thought," Lord Byron, it seems, "stooped proudly, as though it scarce deserved his verse." Now, as the verse depends upon the thought—a dependence strikingly illustrated in Mr. Pollok's "Course of Time," only in the wrong way—and as the thought is here spoken of as being the '*loftiest*,' we cannot see with what propriety it could be said to be unworthy of the verse. This, too, however, no doubt admits of explanation. But Mr. Pollok goes on:

"Suns, moons and stars, and clouds his sisters were;  
Rocks, mountains, meteors, seas and winds, and storms,  
His brothers—younger brothers, whom he scarce  
As equals deemed."

Heaven help us!—here are a host of relations, truly—and such relations! But we had always understood that Lord Byron never had but one sister, and she a half-sister—the Hon. Mrs. Leigh, now, we believe, living in London; and, if we remember rightly, he was an only son. In this catalogue of Lord Byron's "sisters," celestial, elemental, and mundane, we must not pass over the mention of the "moons"—but what moons? Had Mr. Pollok been looking through a telescope at the satellites of Jupiter and Saturn? We doubt whether Lord Byron was ever much addicted to the use of that instrument; and though he may have been aware of their existence, he did not probably see his 'sisters' very often. Mr. Pollok is mistaken, too, in saying that the 'meteors' and the "mountains" were Lord Byron's *younger* brothers—a not unparadonable mistake, however, seeing that he had so many affinities to adjust—although an application at St. James's Palace, would perhaps have set him right. Mr. Pollok proceeds thus:—

—"All passions of all men,  
The wild and tame, the gentle and severe;  
All thoughts, all maxims sacred and profane;  
All creeds, all seasons—time, eternity!  
All that was hoped, all that was feared by man,  
He tossed about as tempest withered leaves."

The deuce he did! what—all? 'Seasons, time, and eternity?' Why, not Milton's Devil himself, although he walked with

"A spear to equal which the tallest pine  
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast,  
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,"

ever achieved any thing half so portentous—so prodigious as this! Amazing man!—by whom seasons, time and eternity, were thus "tossed about like leaves," and "tempest withered leaves," too! And yet, it is not, perhaps, wholly incredible that *he* should have achieved this, who, we are told, was made up of "*all* passions of *all* men—*all* thoughts, *all* maxims, sacred and profane; *all* creeds!" The inspired Volume does, indeed, assure us, that we are



"fearfully and wonderfully made"—but it remained for Mr. Pollok to exemplify and illustrate, as it were, the divine assurance, by a kind of exhibition of the "perilous stuff" of our moral and mental anatomy. We had always looked upon Lord Byron as a very extraordinary man, in the better sense of that word; but the conception which Mr. Pollok seems to have formed of him, as conveyed in the above passage, was one which, had Lord Byron lived to read the "Course of Time," must, we cannot doubt it, have startled his moral apprehension, and staggered his faith as to the possibility of ever learning the wise lesson of Antiquity, "Know thyself"—and have tempted him to exclaim, "I know nothing of myself!" Having thus "tossed about" the "seasons, time, and eternity," Lord Byron "retires back into his soul alone and dark,

As some fierce comet of tremendous size."

It will be of little moment to say, that comets are in themselves opaque bodies; they derive their light from the sun, and are so far quite as luminous as himself.

"The sun to me is dark,  
And silent as the moon,"

but, then, Sampson was actually blind, like the old bard himself; but we are not told that Mr. Pollok had lost his eye sight—whatever other sense he may have lacked. How, then, does this image of the "comet," and no ordinary one, either, but of "tremendous size," assort with the "darkness" into which Lord Byron is represented as "retiring," when he goes "back into his soul"—as well he might, after the extraordinary achievement of "tossing about the seasons"—how, we ask, does the image of the "comet" assort with this "darkness?" Will the Editor of the London Literary Gazette, or the wise, Editorial head of the Boston Statesman, or—[et tu quoque?] will our able and ingenious friend of the Southern Review, undertake to explain this to us? But our task is not yet done. After having thus wielded—with an omnipotence never before assigned to mortal—the elements of earth and air, Lord Byron, it would seem, comes out of his soul—

into which we are told he had 'gone back,'—for where do we find him next? Start not, reader, he is now on "the loftiest top of Fame's dread mount"! Well, what does he do there? Why, he "looks"! Where, or what does he look like? God knows *where*, for we are not told; possibly, like Mr. Campbell's personified Mountain, he

' Looks from his throne of clouds o'er half the world ;'

but we can safely tell thee, reader, what he looks *like*, for we have Mr. Pollok's own words for it—he looks like—what do you suppose he looks like?—why, he looks—listen, but, as we said before, start not—he looks, then, like—"a Bird!" Ah, a bird! Yes, and of "heavenly plumage," too, that "came down from higher regions and perched it there, to see what lay beneath." This "bird" must have had a great deal of curiosity to come all the way "down from higher regions"—whether polar "regions," or "regions" of air, we are not informed—merely "to see what lay beneath!" Lord Byron is here made, like a sort of poetical Proteus, to take almost all shapes; he is likened, first, to a "vast river of unfailing source, opening new fountains in the human heart:" and on the next page, only, he is transformed into a "fierce comet of tremendous size, to which the stars do reverence"—and, last, a little below this, he is represented as a "bird, coming down from higher regions to see what lies beneath it!"—Lord Byron's own "Deformed Transformed," was nothing to this!

The remarkable passage about "a man of rank"—so specified in the "Index"—now, at length, draws to a conclusion, the burden, or, rather, the sum and substance of which is, that "the nations gazed"—as well they might, "and wondered much, and praised." This assurance is three or four times repeated on the same page:

"Great man! the nations gazed, and wondered much,  
And praised; and many called his evil good;  
Wits wrote in favor of his wickedness;  
And kings to do him honor took delight"—

never that we know of—it was quite the reverse, indeed, for Lord Byron was an ultra-Liberal in politics, though an aristocrat by birth, as well as temper; and despised, or professed to despise, "Principalities and

Thrones"—was never at "court," at least in London; though we believe he did once attend a royal levee there, upon being informed that it would gratify his 'Majesty the King'—but no matter, the line sounds well enough, and we shall let it pass, and go on with the rest:

"Thus full of titles"—

What titles? He was a Peer of the realm, Baron, Lord Byron, but nothing more:

"Thus full of titles, flattery, honor, fame;  
Beyond desire, beyond ambition full,  
He died—he died of what."

This is a very emphatic question, and the reply is no less so—he "died," it seems,

"Of wretchedness."

This is a mistake, however. Lord Byron died—as Mr. Pollok might have ascertained—of fever, from a cold brought on by exposure at Missolonghi—but we beg pardon for interrupting Mr. Pollok. He proceeds, then, to tell us, that Lord Byron

"Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump  
Of fame; drank early, deeply drank; drank draughts  
That common millions might have quenched; then died  
Of thirst because there was no more to drink."

This was sound "drinking," truly, though hardly sane—"drank early, deeply drank, drank draughts!" and, will you believe it, reader, "draughts," too, that might have quenched *millions*! It is cause of marvel, that he did not die of dropsy, instead of "thirst"—and he "died of thirst," it seems—"because there was no more to drink"—why certainly, no better reason could have been assigned; if Lord Byron could get nothing to "drink," we do not see how he could well escape "dying of thirst."

But we doubt this fact very much. No drought prevailed at Missolonghi during Lord Byron's residence at that place—not, at least, that we ever heard of—its wells and springs were in all probability as copiously supplied with water as those of the rest of Greece; and we dare say, too, there were as good Hollands to be had at Missolonghi, as his Lordship had been accustomed to in London. But it is only a little before this,

that we are told Lord Byron "died of *wretchedness*;" and it is plain—if there be any but one thing plain in these pages—that the "*wretchedness*" here meant, was of a very different sort from that produced by famine, or any dearth other than the one here alluded to—the dearth of feeling. Why, then, make Lord Byron, who thus dies of "*wretchedness*," die, only a few lines afterwards, of "*thirst*?" Was Mr. Pollok not content with the moral and mental "*wretchedness*," of which he plainly insinuates that Lord Byron "*died*," but something must be superadded, and the agony of "*thirst*" come in aid of the anguish of thought?

" 'O water, water'—smiling Hate denies  
Its victim's prayer, for if he drinks he dies."

Lord Byron seems in these lines to have anticipated the death which Mr. Pollok has here meted him.

On the whole, then, if the reader shall have succeeded in extracting any thing definite from this passage about a "man of rank," if it shall have afforded him the smallest insight into the matter around and about which it raves and wanders at random; if it shall have placed its subject in a light in which he can view it with any possible distinctness of vision—in short, if he can rise from its perusal and say, that it has furnished him with even a tolerable conception of what may have been the real character and condition of the illustrious Person, with whose genius, its fortunes, its follies, and its fame, it has thus ventured to meddle, we can only say, that he has been more favored and more fortunate than ourselves. Let us suppose the passage literally a picture, and not a description in words, and where would the eye rest? what could it discern? We candidly and conscientiously confess, we know not what to liken it to, unless it be the illustration of Shakspear's *Mid-Summer's Night Dream*, to be seen in the gallery of engravings from his plays, in the Library Society of this city. It is, in truth, a monstrous creation, distorted and misshapen—the veriest night-mare of a dyspeptic fancy; and challenges the application to Mr. Pollok, of the lines which Lord Byron, rather ungenerously, perhaps, appropriated to poor Bloomfield:



"Him too the mania, not the muse hath seized,  
Not inspiration, but a mind diseased."

Burke, if we recollect rightly, passes some hard strictures upon the description in the *Æneid*, of the formation of the thunder under the hammer of the Cyclops, as conveying a very imperfect idea of the thing described; but, compared with this passage about Lord Byron, Virgil's thunder is almost palpable to the eye, and distinctly audible to the ear. There is, indeed, "sound and fury," in Mr. Pollok's description, "signifying nothing." Seriously speaking, we do not remember ever to have encountered in all poetry, purporting to be such, we mean—more utter and entire nonsense, unless it be in some of the verses that greeted the Marquis La Fayette on his arrival in the United States. Let any one take up the 3d Canto of 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' and turn to the fine concise analysis it presents you with of the mental idiosyncrasy of a Gibbon and Voltaire, and contrast Lord Byron's picture of those great men, with the picture of Lord Byron by Mr. Pollok. The one is a masterpiece of intellectual anatomy, which places the subject immediately before you, clearly laid open, and familiarly explained; while Mr. Pollok's is miserably mangled and mangled—he has not dissected, but barbarously *hacked* his subject—cut it up—and jumbled it all together—so that on looking at it, you are puzzled to know what it is; and are tempted to ask, *Was this a man?*

In thus laying before our readers the merits, or, rather, the demerits of Mr. Pollok's "Course of Time," we have been governed by a motive which we cannot doubt they will know how to appreciate—the desire of vindicating, if possible, the pretensions of our Southern reading community, at least, to a more just and correct taste in the arts, than we do really think they could possibly have had credit for, had the pompous and absurd judgement which has been passed upon Mr. Pollok's "Course of Time," been suffered to remain unreversed, or, at least, undisputed among us—and having thus returned a "Writ of Error," we of course anticipate the

usual judgement—*Quod iudicium revocetur, annulletur, et penitus pro nullo habetur.* It is sufficiently mortifying that we should continue to submit, as we do, to the literary prescriptions of a people whom, in every other respect, we consider ourselves free to set at defiance; but to be content to receive as oracular, the critical responses, which are so many *leges sub graviore lege*, of those who are themselves under the mental tyranny of that very people—to take at second hand on all matters, whether in the arts or sciences, the opinion of a Boston or Philadelphia Reviewer, who makes up his award in strict conformity to the decisions of a tribunal in London or Paris—is to acquiesce in a species of vassalage that stamps us slaves, and slaves of the last kind—bondmen to those who are themselves not free.

Had the miserable and methodistical ravings—the pious insanity, we had almost said, the insane piety of Mr. Pollok, who, in his hundredth and seventeenth page, gravely compares a “lamp” to a “fig”—

“Why fall the lamps from heaven, as blasted figs?”

had an American writer been guilty of these outpourings of a religious phrenzy, he would—to borrow Mr. Pollok’s own words—have afforded “abundant sport to after days;” and there is not an editor of a newspaper, from Maine to Mississippi, who would not have sought to vindicate his pretensions to some little taste in poetry—of which readers and critics are alike “ready made”—by shewing, or at least attempting to shew, that this *was* prose and that *not* poetry—in short, by ridiculing the book; and assuring his readers, with an imposing air of assumed authority, that the author was either a madman or a fool. Had Mr. Fessenden’s excellent political satire, “Democracy Unveiled,” been the production of an English, or any other foreign writer, it had called forth the most laudatory strains from **our** critics; and found a place in the library of every literary man in America—whereas, who now ever hears of Mr. Fessenden, or his poem? Had the “Course of Time” furnished us with any favorable matter for citation, we should have had

pleasure in laying it before our readers ; but as we have not been able to extract any poetry from its pages, we shall now take our final leave of Mr. Pollok—without thinking it necessary to recommend him to those who, as we said before, may be more favored and more fortunate than ourselves.

#### THE CONFESSION.

"I slew her, Father—and I know  
My soul must answer for the blow :  
And yet I loved her—none can tell  
How passion will at times rebel ;  
None know—who have not felt its force,  
That grief and shame—regret—remorse,  
Are but the fruits of that dark tree,  
The Upas of man's destiny.  
I loved her—and when now I think  
Upon her doom, my soul will sink,  
And withers, Father, at the thought  
Of the dark death that I have wrought.  
And in this hour, when a gleam  
Of light breaks in upon my brain,  
The past seems like a horrid dream  
That memory would forget in vain.  
For days I've sat in this dark cell,  
Chained down as in a living hell !  
And in the anguish of my soul,  
I've madly called upon her name,  
And heard the distant echoes roll,  
And then come back, but not the same—  
A thousand voices answered me !  
Sent up from souls in agony ;  
The laugh, the howl, the blasphemy—  
The loud long shriek—and silence all ;  
I dashed my brain against the wall—  
I strove to rend my galling chain  
With nerves that gathered strength from pain,  
I wrung the links—and not in vain.  
I burst them with a sudden bound,  
And from this prison under ground,  
I rushed into the upper air—  
They brought me back, and chained me here :  
With vultures on my vitals preying,  
Whose fangs remorseless, death delaying,  
Have gorged the last life-drops at length !  
My powers fail, as fails my strength—  
And the long agony is o'er."  
His spirit from that dungeon floor,  
Spurning the form it could not save,  
Mounted above, beyond the grave.  
Less happy in his life than death,  
From the frail body passed the breath  
Without a struggle—not a sign  
Marked the transition there from pain,  
To realms where love and life are both divine,  
Where sorrow comes not, sin has left no stain.

J. W. S.

## MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS.

To the world, generally, no history is more frequently misrepresented, and none after all, so little understood, as that of the middle ages; concerning which, we are often perplexed to find out how sensible men can hold forth such erroneous doctrines as are sometimes met with. Even grave historians, in attempting to avoid the faults and partialities of their predecessors, have fallen into the same. Such has ever been the case concerning the Monastic Institutions of those ages, whose history and character we have thought fit to discuss in the following remarks;—with the hope, that, although they may not agree with the sentiments of many of our readers, they may nevertheless tend to awaken in them a search after a portion of history hitherto so much neglected, and yet so very interesting.

The period, to which we particularly allude, commences with the extinction of the Western Roman Empire; and continues down to the formation of the first Ottoman, including in its formula almost one thousand years. When the mind looks back upon the unlimited boundary of ignorance and anarchy that sprung up from the ruins of Rome—when it beholds that city of universal triumph and science, which had just then resumed her name and glory under Justinian and Belisarius, withdrawing from the world at the invasion of the Lombard and Ostrogoth, it is then that the Institutions of the Monks, and the principles that led to their establishment, are fully developed. Literature, if there was any at all in the middle ages was to be found only in their seclusions and retired abodes. At that period the whole of Europe was elated at the subversion of Rome: the Celt, the Scandinavian, the Sarmatian, and in fact, all the Northern Powers, began to feel the prowess of their arms: they all fought, but like the winds in the fable, triumph was their ruin. Britain, whose white mountains, Cæsar just invaded, appears to have been the only State that could uphold herself in that universal confusion. That very courage which the Roman Gen-



eral awakened in her people, together with the pure principles of rectitude which St. Austin in after times preached among them, had both united to place her a step higher than Rome herself had ever been! That country was consequently, the safest retirement for the Monk. At an age like that, one can easily imagine the state of literature; the sandy desert, with but here and there a cultivated spot, or the stormy night with a few solitary stars, at once associate with our minds Europe and all its learning. What a bright page then is the history of the Monks, who amidst this wreck of knowledge, resolutely set out to save its scattered fragments. How great must have been the zeal and alacrity, with which they effected their every undertaking. We consider such characters the most beautiful in the circle of history, and would hold them up to the young mind as examples far more worthy of emulation, than the philosophic death of Socrates or the pageant martyrdom of Leonidas.

In viewing the history of the Monks, we shall consider them exactly as they were--“a community of pious men devoted to literature and the arts” retiring from the turmoil of government, to enjoy, along with christianity, a delightful philosophy. And if before judging of the merits of this class of men we consider well the principles upon which they founded their institutions and discipline, we will venture to say, that instead of upbraiding them for ignorance and sloth, we will oftener bestow upon them high and merited praise. To show their moral influence upon the present age, as well as that in which they lived, would be to refer our readers to the lovers of classical learning.

They will tell us, that the Monks amidst the contentions of Europe, and the contempt at that time cast upon every thing like learning, preserved, and even copied the only remains of Greek and Roman literature; and besides this, they will tell us that those men not only corrected the defiled texts of the ancient authors, but also added to them the most excellent notes and commentaries of their own. Any one can form an estimate

of the neglect that must have been extended towards the classic authors, by a people like that of the middle ages ; a people whose chief occupation was that of arms. Is it to be supposed that such a people could have had any relish for the philosophy, the poetry or the eloquence of Greece and Rome ?—That they would have turned from the field of battle to view the land consecrated to stern virtue and inspiring song ? No ! poetry and eloquence would have died with the mighty orators and poets with whom they originated ; and Europe so far from reaching the highest point of civilization, would have elapsed back into the profoundest ignorance and barbarity. “Hence,” says an English Reviewer, “we may look upon the Monks as upon the green Oasis in the desert : like stars in a moonless night they shine upon us with tranquil ray.” In that era where can the eye look for an improvement in arts or a discovery in science, except to the precincts of their institutions. If we examine their knowledge in either the liberal or mechanic arts, we find to none are we more indebted : open the books of architecture, and what forms exhibit more grandeur and elegance than theirs ? Where do we meet them, inferior to us, in systematic philosophy ? In astronomy and botany, they have equalled, if not far surpassed us ; and the learned Dr. Gall places their metaphysical knowledge far above ours.\* Indeed it is hard to lay the hand upon the page of history, where they fall beneath us in any one of the sciences. If they have not far excelled us in discoveries, they have at least laid the foundation upon which we now build. For indeed our systems of astronomy, of botany, of architecture and of metaphysics, are all made up of materials hewn out by them. To prove more clearly our assertion, would be to carry

\* Gall and Spurzheim, the renowned anatomists who have in their philosophical writings, borne the most ample testimony to the super excellence of the Catholic Fathers of the Church, from whose writings they have quoted immensely, declared that after wading through all the paltry trash of modern French physiology and Scottish philosophy, they found the only useful observations on the human mind in the works of the ancient Catholics of the Middle Ages. Rejecting the verbose and unmeaning writings of Hobbes, Des Cartes, Locke, Stewart and other metaphysical writers, they have interspersed their works with quotations from St. Cyprian, St. Augustine, St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Jerome and other luminaries of the early ages of Catholicism.—*Letters on the Science and Literature of the Middle Ages.*

our readers through the detailed history of those institutions; to lay open to view the biography and works of the founders of them, and more especially to propound and examine their influence upon Europe, in its feudal state. To the last, we shall attend more particularly, after making one extract, concerning Roger Bacon, a Franciscan Monk. Dr. Shaw observes, that he was beyond all comparison the greatest man of his time, and might perhaps stand in competition with the greatest that have appeared since. It is wonderful, considering the ignorant age in which he lived, how he came by such a depth of knowledge on all subjects. His writings are composed with that elegance, conciseness and strength, and adorned with such just and exquisite observations on nature, that, among all the chemists we do not know his equal. He wrote many treatises, some of which, are lost or locked up in private libraries. From a repeated perusal of his works, we find that our Friar was no stranger to many of the capital discoveries of the present and past ages. Gunpowder he certainly knew: thunder and lightning he tells us, may be produced by art, for that sulphur, nitre and charcoal, which when separate, have no sensible effect, yet when mixed together in due proportion and closely confined and fired, they yield a loud report. A more precise description of gunpowder cannot be given in words; and yet a Jesuit, Bartholomew Schwartz, some years after, has had the glory of discovery. He likewise mentions a sort of unextinguishable fire prepared by art, which shows he was not unacquainted with phosphorus: and that he had a notion of the rarefaction of air, and the structure of the air pump, is past contradiction.

Dr. Shaw, in his history of physic, says, that he was the miracle of the age in which he lived, and the greatest genius perhaps for mechanical knowledge, which ever appeared in the world since Archimedes: he appears likewise to have been master of the whole science of optics. From his life and writings we find that he understood the camera obscura, magnifying and diminishing glasses, and the telescope. His skill for astronomy

was very great; he greatly perfected the reformation of the calender and many other things, that may be learnt from a perusal of his life. Besides this instance we could mention innumerable others, equally celebrated in the various departments of learning; but our space does not permit it. We shall therefore consider them as a social body.\*

It is quite natural to suppose that men who united like the Monks for the reciprocal benefit of each other, must have, in the course of time, accumulated considerable wealth; but the use to which they applied it, is what persons are commonly least of all acquainted with; nor could we expect to find it otherwise, when historians will so knowingly falsify the truth, and would make us think that because the Monks did possess riches, that therefore they were slothful and enervated by excess of indulgence. This is far from being the fact when we know that it was their active industry and saving temperance, which accumulated for them those vast resources of lands and money, which brought down upon their heads the pious wrath of Old England's lecherous king. We acknowledge that some of them might have deviated from a rigid morality; yet to apply this character to all, would be discordant with the strict modes of reasoning; it would be making a rare exception to proof against a general fact; or taking a partial abuse of, to condemn an order of men at their time of day, useful and correct in all the relations of law and civil intercourse. For, who ever pictured to himself their Scriptoria, in which they transcribed the most invaluable works of antiquity; or their libraries in which they treasured up those works, and believed that they were the labors of men indolent and ignorant. Did not the Monks employ their talent and

\* A writer in the last number of the North American Review, (Art. 2d, Clarendon's History) has the following elegant and recondite sentence, "His (Hume) exquisite skill in unravelling the labyrinth of early British history; the masterly discrimination with which he has exposed the absurdities of Monkish invention;"—certainly this latter paragraph displays more of that knowledge the possession of which the writer has arrogated to himself; nor does it exactly suit that system of free thinking, which we believe it has been his aim to advocate. We would advise our elder friend to feel his way, to ascertain and to look deeper into the grounds of his assertion, before he attempts to impose them upon the public, under the veil of his "pure and elegant language."



their wealth in the establishment of schools and colleges, and did not the greatest good emanate therefrom? They were the great preservers of liberty and learning. Was it not the founder of one these very Institutions that first explicated and held up to the Barons and Lords of England the precious character of Henry I. and by so doing, did he not effect the entire subversion of feudal oppression? When we look over the globe, we find that its better part has been christianized by the exertions of these men. They alone could succeed in bringing into one fold the Goth, the Æthiop, the Siberian and the Tartar, and in giving Christian laws to the followers of Vishnu and Seeva, and the savage inhabitants beyond the Gulph of Mexico.

If the lamentation of their downfall may be adduced as an evidence of their importance, the sentiment of all Europe could be brought to that effect. We are expressly told that at their suppression, the people made the loudest complaints. And so indeed they might, since the art of ages has scarce made an equivalent for the noble buildings which Henry VIII. so illegally destroyed. This is not an assertion of our own; it is what men of science have said and are willing still to say. We do not wonder then that the people lamented when they beheld the destruction of those temples and monasteries which they had always held sacred; those sanctuaries in which for ages, the king and the subject had knelt in pious devotion. It was in those temples and sanctuaries that they centered their hope, and by beholding the immolated offering on those altars of the Most High God, alone did they look for a spiritual happiness and immortality:

“ Per quæ spiritus et vita redit bonis,  
Post Mortem.”

The liberal mind, cannot behold their suppression without anathematizing the monster who caused it; nor can posterity recur to their fate without a sentiment of pity. Yet such has been the spirit of the age, that the

\* The first college of which we have any definite notion, was established in Paris, by Aleinus, a Benedictine Monk.

Monks have been reviled in the most ignominious manner, and their history written by the most prejudiced hands; while every charge, if not altogether unfounded, rests, to say the least of it upon a very precarious basis. And shall this spirit last? shall we continue to abuse the men who carried philosophy and the arts to their highest pitch, and awakened under the banners of the Cross the most ennobling feelings of virtue—who implanted the seeds of religion in the Pagan Countries of the Euphrates, and raised the adoration of the one God over the multitudinous idolatry of Negroland and of Guinea? The prejudice may continue—the cloud may even shut out the truth from our eyes, but like the sun it will at last shine forth. The day will sooner or later come, when we will have a literature for ourselves—in its formation, therefore, let it be the aim of every American to build its nationality upon conclusions, drawn from facts. Let us *take nothing for granted*, especially in forming our opinions of human institutions and principles, and not till then, can we hope to form a literature, peculiar only to this Great Republic.

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WALSH calls the last number of the *Southern Review*, “a collection of political pamphlets, rather than, &c.” Now, really Robert, how can *you* have any objection to politics, who have been “fussily fishing” on in them all your life? Have you forgotten the *American Review*—those two ponderous tomes you put forth shortly after your return from an excursion up the Garonne? Have you forgotten them, Robert? or are you ashamed of the recollection?

A “collection of political pamphlets,” for sooth! A plague upon your impudence. Do you remember those long diatribes against Napoleon and his government, together with your laudatory strains sung to the burden of “Old England forever.”

Why, you unblushing varlet, how dare you style the *Southern Review*, or any other review, “a collection

of political pamphlets"—you who, under cover of a literary title, made your miserable *American Review* a vehicle for slanderous vituperation, and the virulent outpourings of a party spirit, which you have no longer either the credit or ability to support. The foolish deference shown for your opinions by certain well meaning editors in this country, has absolutely flattered you with the belief that you are a very extraordinary man, when all who know any thing about you, know that upon the very subjects on which you desire to appear most at home, you are a mere pretender, and at best, a half-gifted sort of literary Jackal. You have the "apology of dullness," Robert, but it will not be discreet to plead it too often.

#### A POET'S RECORD.

Be it remembered, that I, a *soi-disant* Poet of the nineteenth century, having no fire, and no money to procure firewood, am compelled to retire to bed this evening, before nine o'clock, in the midst of a pathetic apostrophe to Love, in order to avoid freezing from excessive cold.

Air—*The prospect before us.*  
Sung by Poverty and the Muse, hugging one-another in the corner, to keep warm—the Poet keeping time, with an empty bread-basket in one hand, and a broken Lyre in the other.

The above record, Messieurs Editors, I send for publication in your Journal, that future times may wonder how an era so enlightened as the present, should permit such a memorial to be handed down to posterity.

ORESTES.

[We sympathize very sincerely with Orestes. If it be any consolation to have company which bears its own modicum of suffering without sharing ours, we can only say that such duets, with the identical actors, are frequently performed for our edification.—Edrs.]

## THE NEW YEAR.

We do not know that we can well claim exemption from that old and friendly custom, which requires Editors of all kinds to lucubrate on the regular change and transition from one year to the other, for the great benefit and satisfaction of their readers ; although like many of our quondam brethren, if we may be permitted to judge by the newspaper speeches for the present occasion, we do not know well what to say. We certainly have some honest wishes, the gratification of which may create material for our next new year's address.

We wish, in the first place, as in duty bound, a happy New-Year to all our present patrons, and such as may have taste enough, during the ensuing year to become so. We wish an improvement in all conditions, and every employment, the progress of which, may prove beneficial to morals, government, or population. We wish rogues to grow honest ; honest men, to acquire no new art, or science—high men to grow humble, and talented men, modest ; and, to conclude, we wish such of the good citizens of Charleston as have not yet subscribed to our Journal, to call immediately upon our Agent in Broad-street, if they desire to possess themselves of the benefit of our labors, and to furnish us, with the not unacceptable good arising from their subscriptions.

## ADELLE'S MOUTH.

How shall I venture to describe her mouth,  
That rosy Bible on which Love has sworn ;  
Fresh as the Zephyr, from the sunny South,  
Soft as the Tulip, smiling at the Morn,  
Two budding rose-leaves, which, with emulous growth,  
Warring for sole-rule, on the stem where born,  
Disclose beneath, in many an amorous curl  
Two links of white, and laughter-loving pearl.



## OUR THEATRE

UNDER a general notice of an intention, on the part of the Editors, to establish a dramatic censorship in this Journal of the performances at our theatre during the season, we gave admission to a severe criticism upon the company on the first evening of exhibition. This notice, we are informed, was unjustly severe ; and having attended on the subsequent nights, we feel ourselves bound to say, that many of the faults reprobated in the criticism alluded to, were certainly not visible to us. We would not be understood to speak of the company generally, as faultless in itself ; but taken in comparison with such as have appeared for several successive seasons in Charleston, we must say that the present manager, who seems indefatigable, enterprising, and certainly talented, deserves much commendation.

We would beg leave to submit, in opposition to the opinions of the correspondent before adverted to, of our November number—that we do not think the practice of starring so detrimental as he supposes. There is no doubt, that to a certain extent, the practice is injurious to the interests of the Theatre. It creates a taste for comfits, and thereby occasions the simple repast of every day to be neglected—but we fear that the cause of that absence of all dramatic taste, which is the reproach of our city, is to be found in causes more deeply seated than this. In the remoteness of our Theatre from the centre and extremes of our city—in the proprietary interests in the Theatre—in our systems of education, which go solely to fitting a boy for the desk and counter, forgetting that he has a head to understand and a heart to receive pleasure ; and directing his attention, as if it was the God through whose agency alone every desire is to be gratified, to the attainment of dollars and cents. Another cause may be found in the great depression in our community—a depression that has been increasing for many years and rendering Theatrical, as well as every other amusement, so far from a continual and necessary relaxation from business, an enjoyment of only occasional gratification. Let these difficulties be met and overthrown, and our Theatre must prosper.

## FINE ARTS.

It is not by spreading its numbers over a wide extent of territory, by multiplying its industrious establishments, and by an exclusive devotion to the pursuits of gain, in which,

"Man contends with man, as foe with foe,"

that a nation best advances its interests, and attains to true greatness, or acquires intrinsic power; for wealth does not constitute the strength, nor prosperity the highest glory of a people. The extended empire of Persia, with its arrayed millions and boundless wealth, was intrinsically less powerful than the little state of Greece, or the still more dwarfish republic of Sparta; nor could the most costly products of her purple looms, or the golden drinking cups of her kings, embossed with pearls, be for a moment compared in value to the precious works and inimitable monuments of Grecian art and genius.

A nation enjoys the inestimable advantage of being enabled to perfect the conceptions of genius; of reaping the slowly matured fruits of wisdom and experience; of fulfilling the counsels of the sage, and realizing the visions of the patriot. It should exist, not for itself, but for the world and posterity; and should aim at the glory of holding out the lights of knowledge and improvement to successive ages and generations: nor should it be content with surpassing its contemporaries in greatness and renown, but, nourishing a yet loftier ambition, it should seek to elevate itself above all after rivalry—to retain the palm of superiority, when it has ceased to exist, and can no longer contend for it.

## WOMEN.

Women, when women truly—are much more  
Than women only—to the enthusiast lover,  
They are inspiring night gems, and their lore,  
Is of unearthly images, that hover,  
Like living stars upon a spell bound shore,  
That spirits of the dead are watching over—  
Their love is the fixed planet that has shone,  
And lit the heart, when all its other lights are gone.

G.